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GRACE ABOUNDING

TO

THE CHIEF OF SINNERS:

IN A FAITHFUL ACCOUNT

OF THE

LIFE AND DEATH OF JOHN BUNYAN;

Or, A brief relation of the exceeding Mercy of God in Christ to him: namely in his taking him out of the Dunghill, and converting of him to the Faith of his blessed Son Jesus Christ. Here is also particularly shewed what sight of, and what trouble he had for sin; and also what various Temptations he hath met with, and how God carried him through them.

CORRECTED AND MUCH ENLARGED BY THE AUTHOR, FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE TEMPTED AND DEJECTED CHRISTIAN

"Come and hear all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.—*Psalms lxvi.* 16.

PREFACE.

WRITTEN BY THE AUTHOR, AND DEDICATED TO THOSE WHOM GOD HATH COUNTED HIM WORTHY TO BEGET TO FAITH BY HIS MINISTRY IN THE WORD.

CHILDREN, grace be with you, Amen. I being taken from you in presence, and so tied up that I cannot perform that duty, that from God doth lie upon me to youward for your further edifying and building up in faith and holiness, &c., yet that you may see my soul hath fatherly care and desire after your spiritual and everlasting welfare, I now once again, as before from the top of *Shenir* and *Hermon*, so now from the *lions' dens, and from the mountains of the leopards*, do yet look after you all, greatly longing to see your safe arrival into the desired haven.

I have sent you here enclosed a drop of that honey that I have taken out of the carcass of a lion. I have eaten thereof myself, and am much refreshed thereby. (Temptations, when we meet them at first, are as the lion that roared upon Samson; but if we overcome them, the next time we see them, we shall find a nest of honey within them.) The Philistines understood me not. It is something, a relation of the work of God upon my soul, even from the very first, till now, wherein you may perceive my castings down, and risings up: for he woundeth, and his hands make whole. It is written in the scripture, "The father to the children shall make known the truth of God." Yea, it was for this reason I lay so long at *Sinai*, to see the fire, and the cloud, and the darkness, "that I might fear the Lord all the days of my life upon earth, and tell of his wondrous works to my children."

Moses writ of the journeyings of the children of Israel from Egypt to the land of Canaan; and commanded also, that they did remember their forty years travel in the wilderness. "Thou shalt remember all the ways which the Lord thy God leads thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, and to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep his commandments or no." Wherefore this I have endeavord to do; and not only so, but to publish it also; that, if God will, others may be put in remembrance of what he hath done for their souls, by reading his work upon me.

It is profitable for Christians to be often calling to mind the very beginning of grace with their souls. "It is a night to be much observed to the Lord, for bringing them out of the land of Egypt. This is that night of the Lord to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations." My God, (saith David, Psa. xlii. 6.) my soul is cast down within me; but I will remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar." He remembereth also the lion and the bear, when he went to fight with the giant of Gath.

It was Paul's accustomed manner, and that when tried for his life, even to open before his judges the manner of his conversion. He would think of that day, and that hour, in which he first did meet with grace; for he found it supported him. When God had brought the children of Israel out of the Red Sea, far into the wilderness, yet

they must turn quite about thither again, to remember the drowning of their enemies there, for though they sang his praise before, yet they soon forgat his works.

In this discourse of mine you may see much, much I say, of the grace of God towards me. I thank God I can count it much; for it was above my sins, and Satan's temptations too. I can remember my fears and doubts, and sad months, with comfort; they are as the head of Goliah in my hand. There was nothing to David like Goliah's sword, even that sword that should have been sheathed in his bowels; for the very sight and remembrance of that did preach forth God's deliverance to him. Oh! the remembrance of my great sins, of my great temptations, and of my great fear of perishing forever! They bring afresh into my mind the remembrance of my great help, my great supports from heaven, and the great grace that God extended to such a wretch as I.

I could have enlarged much in this my discourse, of my temptations and troubles for sin, as also of the merciful kindness and working of God with my soul. I could also have stepped into a style higher than this in which I have here discoursed; and could have adorned all things more than here I seemed to do; but I dare not. God did not play in tempting of me; neither did I play when I sunk as into a bottomless pit, when the "pangs of hell caught hold upon me;" wherefore I may not play in relating of them; but be plain and simple, and lay down the thing as it was. He that liketh it, let him receive it; and he that doth not, let him produce a better. Farewell.

My dear Children:

The milk and honey is beyond this wilderness. God be merciful to you; and grant that you may not be slothful to go in to possess the land.

JOHN BUNYAN.

GRACE ABOUNDING TO THE CHIEF OF SINNERS.

In this my relation of the merciful working of God upon my soul, it will not be amiss, if, in the first place, I do, in a few words, give you a hint of my pedigree, and manner of bringing up; that thereby the goodness and bounty of God towards me, may be the more advanced and magnified before the sons of men.

For my descent then, it was, as is well known to many, of a low and inconsiderable generation: my father's house being of that rank that is meanest, and most despised of all the families in the land. Wherefore, I have not here, as others, to boast of noble blood, or of any high-born state, according to the flesh; though, all things considered, I magnify the heavenly Majesty, for that by this door he brought me into the world, to partake of the grace and life that is in Christ by the Gospel.

But yet notwithstanding the meanness and inconsiderableness of my parents, it pleased God to put it into their hearts to put me to school, to learn me both to read and write; the which I also attained, according to the rate of other poor men's children, though to my shame I confess, I did soon lose that little I learnt, even almost utterly, and that, long before the Lord did work his gracious work of conversion upon my soul.

As for my own natural life, for the time that I was without God in the world, it was, indeed, *according to the course of this world, and the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.* It was my delight to be *taken captive by the devil at his will;* being filled with all unrighteousness; the which did also so strongly work, and put forth itself, both in my heart and life, and that from a child, that I had but few equals, (especially considering my years, which were tender, being few) both for cursing, swearing, lying, and blaspheming the holy name of God.

Yea, so settled and rooted was I in these things, that they became as a second nature to me; the which, as I have also with soberness considered since, did so offend the Lord, that even in my childhood he did scare and affrighten me with fearful dreams, and did terrify me with fearful visions: For often, after I had spent this and the other day in sin, I have in my bed been greatly afflicted, while asleep, with the apprehensions of devils and wicked spirits, who still, as I then thought, labored to draw me away with them, of which I could never be rid.

Also I should at these years, be greatly afflicted and troubled with the thoughts of the fearful torments of hell-fire; still fearing that it would be my lot to be found at last among these devils and hellish fiends, who are there bound down with the chains and bonds of darkness, unto the judgment of the great day.

These things, I say, when I was but a child, but nine or ten years old, did so distress my soul, that then in the midst of my many sports and childish vanities, amidst my vain companions, I was often much cast down, and afflicted in my mind therewith, yet I could not let go my sins: Yea, I was also then so overcome with despair of life and heaven, that I should often wish, either that there had been no hell, or that I had been a devil;

supposing they were only tormentors; that if it must needs be, that I went thither, I might be rather a tormentor, than be tormented myself.

A while after those terrible dreams did leave me, which also I soon forgot; for my pleasures did quickly cut off the remembrance of them, as if they had never been; wherefore with more greediness, according to the strength of nature, I did still let loose the reins of my lust, and delighted in all transgressions against the law of God: so that until I came to the state of marriage, I was the very ringleader of all the youth that kept me company, in all manner of vice and ungodliness.

Yea, such prevalency had the lusts and fruits of the flesh on this poor soul of mine, that had not a miracle of precious grace prevented, I had not only perished by the stroke of eternal justice, but had also laid myself open, even to the stroke of those laws which bring some to disgrace and open shame before the face of the world.

In these days the thoughts of religion were very grievous to me; I could neither endure it myself, nor that any other should; so that when I have seen some read in those books that concerned Christian piety, it would be as it were a prison to me. Then I said unto God, *Depart from me, for I desire not the knowledge of thy ways.* I was now void of all good consideration, heaven and hell were both out of sight and mind; and as for saving and damning, they were least in my thoughts. *O Lord, thou knowest my life, and my ways were not hid from thee.*

But this I well remember, that though I could myself sin with the greatest delight and ease, and also take pleasure in the vileness of my companions; yet, even then, if I had at any time seen wicked things, by those who professed goodness, it would make my spirit tremble. As once above all the rest, when I was in the height of vanity, yet hearing one to swear, that was reckoned for a religious man, it had so great a stroke upon my spirit, that it made my heart ache.

But God did not utterly leave me, but followed me still, not with convictions, but with judgments; yet such as were mixed with mercy. For once I fell into a creek of the sea, and hardly escaped drowning. Another time I fell out of a boat into Bedford river, but mercy yet preserved me alive. Besides, another time, being in the field with one of my companions, it chanced that an adder passed over the highway, so I having a stick in my hand, struck her over the back; and having stunned her, I forced open her mouth with my stick, and plucked her sting out with my fingers; by which act, had not God been merciful unto me, I might by my desperateness, have brought myself to my end.

This also I have taken notice of, with thanksgiving: When I was a soldier, I with others, were drawn out to go to such a place to beseige it; but when I was just ready to go, one of the company desired to go in my room: to which when I consented, he took my place; and coming to the siege, as he stood sentinel, he was shot in the head with a musket bullet, and died.

Here, as I said, were judgments and mercy, but neither of them did awaken my soul to righteousness; wherefore I sinned still, and grew more and more rebellious against God, and careless of my own salvation.

Presently after this, I changed my condition into a married state, and my mercy was, to light upon a wife whose father was counted godly; this woman and I, though we came together as poor as poor might be, (not having so much houschold stuff as a dish or a spoon betwixt us both) yet this she had for her part, "The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven; the Practice of Piety;" which her father had left her when he died. In these two books I should sometimes read with her, wherein I also found some things that were somewhat pleasing to me; but all this while I met with no conviction. She also would be often telling me of what a godly man her father was, and how he would reprove and correct vice, both in his house, and among his neighbors, what a strict and holy life he led in his days, both in word and deed.

Wherefore these books, with the relation, though they did not reach my heart, to awaken it about my sad and sinful state, yet they did beget within me some desires to reform my vicious life, and fall in very eagerly with the religion of the times; to wit, to go to church twice a day, and that too with the foremost; and there should very devoutly both say and sing, as others did, yet retaining my wicked life; but withal, I was so overrun with the spirit of superstition, that I adored, and with great devotion, even all things (both the high place, priest, clerk, vestment service, and what else) belonging to the church; counting all things holy that were therein contained, and especially, the priest and clerk most happy, and without doubt greatly blessed, because they were the servants, as I then thought, of God, and were principal in the holy temple to do his work therein.

This conceit grew so strong in a little time upon my spirit, that had I but seen a priest (though never so sordid and debauched in his life,) I should find my spirit fall under him, reverence him, and knit unto him; yea, I thought, for the love I did bear unto them (supposing they were the ministers of God) I could have laid down at their

feet and have been trampled on by them; their name, their garb, and work, did so intoxicate and bewitch me.

After I had been thus for some considerable time, another thought came in my mind; and that was, whether we were of the Israelites or no? For finding in Scripture that they were once the peculiar people of God, thought I, if I were one of this race, my soul must needs be happy. Now again, I found within me a great longing to be resolved about this question, but could not tell how I should; at last I asked my father of it, who told me we were not.—Wherefore, then I fell in my spirit, as to the hopes of that, and so remained.

But all this while, I was not sensible of the danger and evil of sin; I was kept from considering that sin would damn me, what religion soever I followed, unless I was found in Christ: nay, I never thought of him, nor whether there was such an one, or no. *Thus man while blind doth wander, but wearieth himself with vanity, for he knoweth not the way to the city of God.*

But one day, amongst all the sermons our parson made, his subject was to treat of the Sabbath-day, and of the evil of breaking that, either with labor, sports, or otherwise: (now I was, notwithstanding my religion, one that took much delight in all manner of vice, and especially that was the day that I did solace myself therewith,) wherefore I fell in my conscience under this sermon, thinking and believing that he made that sermon on purpose to show me my evil-doing. And at that time I felt what guilt was, though never before, that I can remember; but then I was, for the present, greatly beloaded therewith, and so went home when the sermon was ended, with a great burden upon my spirit.

This, for an instant, did benumb the sinews of my best delights, and did embitter my former pleasures to me; but hold, it lasted not; for before I had dined, the trouble began to go off my mind, and my heart returned to its old course. But Oh! how glad was I, that this trouble was gone from me, and that the fire was put out, that I might sin again without control! Wherefore, when I had satisfied nature with my food, I shook the sermon out of my mind, and to my old custom of sports and gaming I returned with great delight.

But the same day, as I was in the midst of a game of Cat, and having struck it one blow from the hole, just as I was about to strike it the second time, a voice did suddenly dart from heaven into my soul, which said, "Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to heaven, or have thy sins and go to hell?" At this I was put to an exceeding amaze; whcrefore leaving my cat upon the ground, I looked up to heaven, and was, as if I had, with the eyes of my understanding, seen the Lord Jesus looking down upon me, as being very hotly displeased with me, and as if he did severely threaten me with some grievous punishment for these and other ungodly practices.

I had no sooner thus conceived in my mind, but suddenly this conclusion was fastened on my spirit, (for the former hint did again set my sins before my face,) that I had been a great and grievous sinner, and that it was now too late for me to look after heaven; for Christ would not forgive me, nor pardon my transgressions. Then I fell to musing on this also; and while I was thinking of it, and fearing lest it should be so, I felt my heart sink in despair, concluding it was too late; and therefore I resolved in my mind to go on in sin; for, thought I, if the case be thus, my state is surely miserable; miserable if I leave my sins, and but miserable if I follow them; I can but be damned, and if I must be so, I had as good be damned for many sins, as be damned for few.

Thus I stood in the midst of my play, before all that then were present; but yet I told them nothing; but I say, having made this conclusion, I returned desperately to my sport again; and I well remember, that presently this kind of despair did so possess my soul that I was persuaded I could never attain to other comfort than what I should get in sin; for heaven was gone already, so that on that I must not think. Wherefore I found within me great desire to have my fill of sin, still studying what sin was yet to be committed, that I might taste the sweetness of it; and I made as much haste as I could to fill my belly with its delicacies, lest I should die before I had my desires; for that I feared greatly. In these things, I protest before God I lie not, neither do I frame this sort of speech; these were really, strongly, and with all my heart my desires. The good Lord, whose mercy is unsearchable, forgive my transgressions!

And I am very confident that this temptation of the devil is more usual among poor creatures, than many are aware of, even to overrun the spirits with a scurvy and seared frame of heart, and benumbing of conscience; which frame he stilly and slily supplieth with such despair, that though not much guilt attendeth souls, yet they continually have a secret conclusion within them, that there is no hope for them; for they have loved sins, therefore after them they will go.

Now therefore I went on in sin with great greediness of mind, still grudging that I could not be satisfied with it as I would. This did continue with me about a month, or more; but one day as I was standing at a neighbor's shop-window, and there cur-

sing and swearing, and playing the madman, after my wonted manner, there sat within the woman of the house, and heard me; who though she was a very loose and ungodly wretch, yet protested that I swore and cursed at the most ungodly rate, that she was made to tremble to hear me; and told me further, that I was the ungodliest fellow for swearing, that she ever heard in all her life; and that I by thus doing, was able to spoil all the youth in the whole town, if they came but in my company.

At this reproof I was silenced, and put to secret shame; and that too, as I thought, before the God of heaven; wherefore, while I stood there, and hanging down my head, I wished with all my heart that I might be a little child again, that my father might teach me to speak without this wicked way of swearing; for, thought I, I am so accustomed to it, that it is in vain to think of a reformation, for I thought that could never be.

But how it came to pass I know not; I did from this time forward, so leave my swearing, that it was a great wonder to myself to observe it; and whereas, before I knew not how to speak unless I put an oath before and another behind, to make my words have authority; now I could, without it, speak better and with more pleasantness than ever I could before. All this while I knew not Jesus Christ, neither did I leave my sports and plays.

But quickly after this, I fell into company with one poor man that made profession of religion; who, as I then thought, did talk pleasantly of the scriptures, and of the matter of religion; wherefore, falling into some love and liking to what he said, I betook me to my Bible, and began to take great pleasure in reading, but especially with the historical part thereof; for as for St. Paul's Epistles, and such like scriptures, I could not away with them, being as yet ignorant, either of the corruptions of my nature, or the want and worth of Jesus Christ to save us.

Wherefore I fell to some outward reformation, both in my words and life, and did set the commandments before me for my way to heaven; which commandments I also did strive to keep, and as I thought, did keep them pretty well sometimes, and then I should have comfort; yet now and then should break one, and so afflict my conscience; but then I should repent, and say, I was sorry for it, and promised God to do better next time, and there get help again; for then I thought I pleased God as well as any man in England.

Thus I continued about a year; all which time our neighbors did take me to be a very godly man, a new and religious man, and did marvel much to see such a great and famous alteration in my life and manners; and indeed so it was, though I knew not Christ, nor grace, nor faith, nor hope; for, as I have well since seen, had I then died, my state had then been most fearful.

But, I say, my neighbors were amazed at this my great conversion, from prodigious profaneness, to something like a moral life; and truly, so they well might; for this my conversion was as great, as for Tom of Bedlam to become a sober man. Now therefore they began to praise, to commend, and to speak well of me, both to my face, and behind my back. Now I was, as they said, become godly; now I was become a right honest man. But Oh! when I understood those were their words and opinions of me, it pleased me mighty well. For though as yet I was nothing but a poor painted hypocrite, yet I loved to be talked of as one that was truly godly. I was proud of my godliness, and indeed I did all I did, either to be seen of, or to be well spoken of by men; and thus I continued for about a twelvemonth, or more.

Now you must know, that before this I had taken much delight in ringing the bell, but my conscience beginning to be tender, I thought such a practice was but vain, and therefore forced myself to leave it; yet my mind hankered; wherefore, I would now go to the steeple-house and look on, though I durst not ring; but I thought this did not become religion neither; yet I forced myself and would look on still; but quickly after, I began to think, how if one of the bells should fall? Then I chose to stand under a main beam, that lay overthwart the steeple, from side to side, thinking here I might stand sure; but then I thought again, should the bell fall with a swing, it might first hit the wall, and then rebounding upon me, might kill me for all this beam. This made me stand in the steeple door; and now thought I, I am safe enough; for if the bell should then fall, I can slip out between these thick walls, and so be preserved notwithstanding.

So after this I would yet go to see them ring, but would not go farther than the steeple door; but then it came into my head, how if the steeple itself should fall? And this thought (it may for aught I know when I stood and looked on) did continually so shake my mind, that I durst not stand at the steeple door any longer, but was forced to flee, for fear the steeple should fall upon my head.

Another thing was my dancing. I was full a year before I could quite leave that; but all this while, when I thought I kept this or that commandment, or did by word or deed any thing that I thought was good, I had great peace in my conscience; and should think with myself God cannot but be now

pleased with me; yea, to relate it in my own way, I thought no man in England could please God better than I.

But poor wretch as I was, I was all this while ignorant of Jesus Christ; and going about to establish my own righteousness; and had perished therein, had not God in mercy shewed me more of my state by nature.

But upon a day, the good providence of God called me to Bedford, to work on my calling; and in one of the streets of that town, I came where there were three or four poor women sitting at a door, in the sun, talking about the things of God; and being now willing to hear their discourse, I drew near to hear what they said, for I was now a brisk talker of myself in the matter of religion; but I may say, *I heard, but understood not;* for they were far above, out of my reach. Their talk was about a new birth, the work of God in their hearts, as also how they were convinced of their miserable state by nature. They talked how God had visited their souls with his love in the Lord Jesus, and with what words and promises they had been refreshed, comforted and supported against the temptations of the devil; moreover, they reasoned of the suggestions and temptations of Satan in particular; and told to each other by what means they had been afflicted; and how they were borne up under his assaults. They also discoursed upon their own wretchedness of heart, and of their unbelief; and did contemn, slight, and abhor their own righteousness, as filthy, and insufficient to do them any good.

And methought they spake as if joy did make them speak; they spake with such pleasantness of scripture language, and with such appearance of grace in all they said, that they were to me, as if they had found a new world; as if they were *people that dwelt alone, and were not to be reckoned among their neighbors.*

At this I felt my own heart began to shake, and mistrust my condition to be naught; for I saw that in all my thoughts about religion and salvation, the new birth did never enter into my mind; neither knew I the comfort of the word and promise, nor the deceitfulness and treachery of my own wicked heart. As for secret thoughts, I took no notice of them; neither did I understand what Satan's temptations were, nor how they were to be withstood and resisted, &c.

Thus, therefore, when I had heard and considered what they said I left them, and went about my employment again, but their talk and discourse went with me; also my heart would tarry with them, for I was greatly affected with their words, both because by them I was convinced that I wanted the true tokens of a truly godly man, and also because by them I was convinced of the happy and blessed condition of him that was such an one.

Therefore I would often make it my business to be going again and again into the company of these poor people; for I could not stay away; and the more I went among them the more I did question my condition: and as I still do remember, presently I found two things within me, at which I did sometimes marvel (especially considering what a blind, ignorant, sordid, and ungodly wretch but just before I was.) The one was a very great softness and tenderness of heart, which caused me to fall under the conviction of what by scripture they asserted; and the other, was a great bending in my mind, to a continually meditating on it, and on all other good things which at any time I heard or read of.

By these things my mind was now so turned that it lay like an horse-leech at the vein, still crying out, *Give, give,* which was so fixed on eternity, and on the things about the kingdom of heaven, (that is, so far as I knew, though as yet, God knows I knew but little) that neither pleasures, nor profits, nor persuasions, nor threats could loose it, or make it let go its hold, and though I may speak it with shame, yet it is in very deed, a certain truth, it would then have been as difficult for me to have taken my mind from heaven to earth, as I have found it often since, to get it again from earth to heaven.

One thing I may not omit: there was a young man in our town, to whom my heart before was knit more than to any other, but he being a most wicked creature for cursing, and swearing, and whoring, I now shook him off, and forsook his company; but about a quarter of a year after I had left him, I met him in a certain lane, and asked him how he did; he after his old swearing and mad way, answered, he was well. But, Harry, said I, "Why do you curse and swear thus? What will become of you if you die in this condition?" He answered me in a great chafe, "What would the devil do for company, if it were not for such as I am?"

About this time I met with some Ranters' books, that were put forth by some of our countrymen, which books were also highly in esteem by several old professors; some of these I read but was not able to make a judgment about them; wherefore as I read in them, and thought upon them, seeing myself unable to judge, I would betake myself to hearty prayer in this manner: "O Lord, I am a fool, and not able to know the truth from error: Lord, leave me not to my own blindness, either to approve of, or condemn this doctrine; if it be of God, let me not despise it; if it be of the devil, let me not embrace it. Lord, I lay my soul in this

matter only at thy foot, let me not be deceived, I humbly beseech thee." I had one religious intimate companion all this while, and that was the poor man I spoke of before; but about this time he also turned a devilish Ranter, and gave himself up to all manner of filthiness, especially uncleanness. He would also deny that there was a God, angel, or spirit; and would laugh at all exhortations to sobriety: when I laboured to rebuke his wickedness, he would laugh the more, and pretend that he had gone through all religions, and could never hit upon the right till now. He told me also, that in a little time I should see all professors turn to the ways of the Ranters. Wherefore abominating these cursed principles, I left his company forthwith, and became to him as great a stranger, as I had been before a familiar.

Neither was this man only a temptation to me, but my calling being in the country, I happened to come into several people's company, who though strict in religion formerly, yet were also drawn away by these Ranters. These would also talk with me of their ways, and condemn me as legal and dark; pretending that they only had attained to perfection, that could do what they would and not sin. Oh! these temptations were suitable to my flesh, I being but a young man, and my nature in its prime: but God, who had, as I hoped, designed me for better things, kept me in the fear of his name, and did not suffer me to accept such cursed principles. And blessed be God, who put into my heart to cry to him to be kept and directed, still distrusting mine own wisdom; for I have since seen the effects of that prayer, in his preserving me, not only from Ranting errors, but from those also that have sprung up since. The Bible was precious to me in those days.

And now methought, I began to look into the Bible with new eyes, and read as I never did before, and especially the epistles of the Apostle St. Paul were sweet and pleasant to me, and indeed then I was never out of the Bible, either by reading or meditation; still crying out to God that I might know the truth, and way to heaven and glory.

And as I went on and read, I hit upon that passage, *To one is given by the spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge by the same spirit; and to another faith, &c.* And though, as I have since seen, that by this scripture the Holy Ghost intends, in special, things extraordinary, yet on me it did then fasten with conviction, that I did want things ordinary, even that understanding and wisdom that other christians had. On this word I mused and could not tell what to do, especially this word *faith* put me to it, for I could not help it, but sometimes must question, whether I had any faith, or no: but I was loth to conclude, I had no faith; for if I do so, thought I, then I shall count myself a very castaway indeed.

No, said I, with myself, though I am convinced that I am an ignorant sot, and that I want those blessed gifts of knowledge and understanding that other people have; yet at a venture I will conclude, I am not altogether faithless, though I know not what faith is; for it was shewn me, and that too (as I have seen since) by Satan, that those who conclude themselves in a faithless state, have neither rest nor quiet in their souls; and I was loth to fall quite into despair.

Wherefore by this suggestion, I was for a while, made afraid to see my want of faith; but God would not suffer me thus to undo and destroy my soul, but did continually against this my sad and blind conclusion, create still within me such suppositions, insomuch that I could not rest content, until I did now come to some certain knowledge whether I had faith or no, this always running in my mind, "But how if you want faith indeed? But how can you tell you have faith?" And besides, I saw for certain, if I had not, I was sure to perish forever.

So that though I endeavoured at the first to look over the business of faith, yet in a little time, I better considering the matter was willing to put myself upon the trial whether I had faith or no. But alas, poor wretch, so ignorant and brutish was I, that I knew not to this day any more how to do it, than I know how to begin and accomplish that rare and curious piece of art, which I never yet saw or considered.

Wherefore while I was thus considering, and being put to a plunge about it, (for you must know, that as yet I had not in this matter broken my mind to any one, only did hear and consider) the tempter came in with this delusion, "that there was no way for me to know I had faith, but by trying to work some miracles; urging those scriptures that seem to look that way, for the enforcing and strengthening his temptation. Nay, one day as I was between Elstow and Bedford, the temptation was hot upon me, to try if I had faith, by doing some miracle; which miracle at this time was this, I must say to the puddles that were in the horsepads, be dry; and to the dry places, be you puddles; and truly one time I was going to say so indeed; but just as I was about to speak, this thought came into my mind; "but go under yonder hedge and pray first, that God will make you able." But when I had concluded to pray, this came hot upon me; that if I prayed, and came again, and tried to do it, and yet did nothing notwithstanding, then to be sure I had no aith, but was a castaway, and lost, nay though I, if it be so, I will not try yet, but will stay a little longer.

So I continued at a great loss; for I thought, if they only had faith, which could do so wonderful things, then I concluded, that for the present I neither had it, nor yet for the time to come, were ever like to have it. Thus I was tossed betwixt the devil and mine own ignorance, and so perplexed, especially at some times, that I could not tell what to do.

About this time, the state and happiness of these poor people at Bedford was thus, in a kind of a vision, presented to me. I saw as if they were on the sunny side of some high mountain, there refreshing themselves with the pleasant beams of the sun, while I was shivering and shrinking with the cold, afflicted with frost, snow, and dark clouds: methought also, betwixt me and them, I saw a wall that did compass about this mountain; now through this wall, my soul did greatly desire to pass; concluding, that if I could I would even go into the very midst of them, and there also comfort myself with the heat of the sun.

About this wall I bethought myself, to go again and again, still praying as I went, to see if I could find some way or passage, by which I might enter therein; but none could I find for some time; at the last, I saw, as it were, a narrow gap, like a little doorway in the wall, through which I attempted to pass: now the passage being very strait and narrow, I made many offers to get in, but all in vain, even until I was well nigh quite beat out, by striving to get in; at last, with great striving, methought I at first did get in my head, and after that, by a sideling striving, my shoulders, and my whole body: then I was exceeding glad, went and sat down in the midst of them, and so was comforted with the light and heat of their sun.

Now this mountain, and wall, &c., was thus made out to me: the mountain signified the Church of the living God; the sun that shone thereon, the comfortable shining of his merciful face on them that were therein; the wall I thought was the word, that did make separation between the Christians and the world; and the gap which was in the wall, I thought, was Jesus Christ, who is the way to God the Father.—(John xvi. 6. Matt. vii. 14.) But forasmuch as the passage was wonderfully narrow, even so narrow, that I could not, but with great difficulty enter in thereat, it showed me, that none could enter into life, but those that were in downright earnest, and unless also they left that wicked world behind them; for here was only room for body and soul, but not for body and soul and sin.

This resemblance abode upon my spirit many days: all which time I saw myself in a forlorn and sad condition, but yet was provoked to a vehement hunger and desire to be one of that number that did sit in the sunshine: now also would I pray wherever I was; whether at home or abroad; in house or field; and would also often, with lifting up of heart, sing that of the fifty-first Psalm, *O Lord consider my distress;* for as yet I knew not where I was.

Neither as yet could I attain to any comfortable persuasion that I had faith in Christ; but instead of having satisfaction here I began to find my soul to be assaulted with fresh doubts about my future happiness; especially with such as these, "whether I was elected; but how if the day of grace be past and gone?"

By these two temptations I was very much afflicted and disquieted; sometimes by one, and sometimes by the other of them. And first, to speak of that about my questioning my election. I found at this time, that though I was in a flame to find my way to heaven and glory, and thought nothing could beat me off from this, yet this question did so offend and discourage me, that I was especially sometimes, as if the very strength of my body also had been taken away by the force and power thereof. This scripture did also seem to me to trample on all my desires; *it is neither in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth; but in God that sheweth mercy.*

With this scripture I could not tell what to do; for I evidently saw, unless that the great God, of his infinite grace and bounty, had voluntarily chosen me to be a vessel of mercy, though I should desire, and long, and labor until my heart did break, no good could come of it. Therefore this would stick with me, "How can you tell that you are elected? And what if you should not? How then?

O Lord, thought I, what if I should not indeed? It may be you are not, said the tempter; it may be so indeed thought I. Why then, said Satan, you had as good leave off, and strive no farther; for if indeed you should not be elected, and chosen of God, there is no hope of your being saved: *For it is neither in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth; but in God that sheweth mercy.*

By these things I was driven to my wits-end, not knowing what to say, or how to answer these temptations: indeed, I little thought that Satan had thus assaulted me, but rather it was my own prudence thus to start the question; for that the elect only obtained eternal life; that I without scruple did heartily close withal; but that myself was one of them, there lay the question.

Thus therefore, for several days, I was greatly assaulted and perplexed, and was often, when I have been walking, ready to sink where I went, with faintness in my

mind; but one day, after I had been so many weeks oppressed and cast down therewith, as I was now quite giving up the ghost of all my hopes of ever attaining life, that sentence fell with weight upon my spirit: *Look at the generations of old, and see; did ever any trust in God, and were confounded?*

At which I was greatly enlightened, and encouraged in my soul; for thus, at that very instant, it was expounded to me: "begin at the beginning of Genesis, and read to the end of the Revelations, and see if you can find, that there was ever any that trusted in the Lord and was confounded." So coming home I presently went to my Bible, to see if I could find that saying, not doubting but to find it presently; for it was so fresh, and with such strength and comfort on my spirit, that it was as if it talked with me.

Well, I looked, but I found it not; only it abode upon me: then did I ask first this good man, and then another, if they knew where it was, but they knew no such place. At this I wondered, that such a sentence should so suddenly, and with such comfort and strength, seize, and abide upon my heart; and yet that none could find it; for I doubted not but it was in the holy scriptures.

Thus I continued above a year, and could not find the place; but at last casting my eye upon the Apocrypha books, I found it in Ecclesiasticus, (Eccles. ii. 16.) This, at the first, did somewhat daunt me; but because by this time I had got more experience of the love and kindness of God, it troubled me the less, especially when considered, that though it was not in those texts that we call holy and canonical; yet, forasmuch as this sentence was the sum and substance of many of the promises, it was my duty to take the comfort of it; and I bless God for that word, for it was of good to me;—that word doth still oft times shine before my face.

After this, that other doubt did come with strength upon me: *But how if the day of grace should be past and gone?* How if you have overstood the time of mercy? Now I remember that one day, as I was walking in the country, I was much in the thoughts of this, *But how if the day of grace is past?* And to aggravate my trouble, the tempter presented to my mind those good people of Bedford, and suggested thus unto me, that these being converted already, they were all that God would save in those parts; and that I came too late; for these had got the blessing before I came.

Now was I in great distress, thinking in very deed that it might be so; wherefore I went up and down bemoaning my sad condition; counting myself far worse than a thousand fools for standing off thus long, and spending so many years in sin as I had done; still crying out, Oh! that I had turned sooner! Oh! that I had turned seven years ago! It made me also angry with myself, to think that I should have no more wit, but to trifle away my time, till my soul and heaven were lost.

But when I had been long vexed with this fear, and was scarce able to take one step more, just about the same place where I received my other encouragement, these words broke in upon my mind, *Compel them to come in, that my house may be filled; and yet there is room.* (Luke xvi. 22, 23.) These words, and especially those, *And yet there is room*, were sweet words to me; for truly I thought that by them I saw there was place enough in heaven for me; and moreover, that when the Lord Jesus did speak these words, he then did think of me; and that he knowing that the time would come, that I should be afflicted with fear that there was no place left for me in his bosom, did before speak this word, and leave it upon record, that I might find help thereby, against this vile temptation. This I then verily believed.

In the light and encouragement of this word I went a pretty while; and the comfort was the more, when I thought that the Lord Jesus should think on me so long ago, and that he should speak those words on purpose for my sake; for I did think verily, that he did on purpose speak them to encourage me withal.

But I was not without my temptations to go back again; temptations I say from Satan, mine own heart, and carnal acquaintance; but I thank God these were outweighed by that sound sense of death, and the day of judgment, which abode, as it were, continually in my view: I should often also think on Nebuchadnezzar; of whom it is said, *He had given him all the kingdoms of the earth.* Yet, thought I, if this great man had all his portion in this world, one hour in hell-fire would make him forget all. Which consideration was a great help to me.

I was almost made, about this time, to see something concerning the beasts that Moses counted clean and unclean: thought those beasts were types of men; the clean, types of them that were the people of God; but the unclean types of such as were children of the wicked one. Now I read, that the clean beasts *chewed the cud;* that is, thought I, they shew us that we must feed upon the word of God; they also *parted the hoof*, I thought that signified, we must part, if we would be saved, with the ways of ungodly men. And also, in further reading about them, I found, that though we did chew the cud, as the hare; yet if we walked with claws, like a dog, or if we did part

the hoof, as the swine, yet if we did not chew the cud, as the sheep, we are still, for all that, but unclean: for I thought the hare to be a type of those that talk of the word, yet walk in the ways of sin; and that the swine was like him that parted with his outward pollution, but still wanted the word of faith, without which there could be no way of salvation, let a man be ever so devout. After this, I found by reading the word, that those that must be glorified with Christ in another world, *must be called by him here;* called to the partaking of a share in his word and righteousness, and to the comforts and first fruits of his Spirit; and to a peculiar interest in all those heavenly things, which do indeed prepare the soul for that rest, and house of glory, which is in heaven above.

Here, again, I was at a very great stand, not knowing what to do, fearing I was not called; for, thought I, if I be not called, what then can do me good? None but those who are effectually called, inherit the kingdom of heaven. But oh! how I loved those words that spake of a *Christian's calling!* As when the Lord said to one, *Follow me:* and to another, *Come after me:* and oh! thought I, that he would say so to me too; how gladly would I run after him!

I cannot now express with what longings and breathings in my soul, I cried to Christ to call me. Thus I continued for a time, all on a flame to be converted to Jesus Christ; and did also see at that day, such glory in a converted state, that I could not be contented without a share therein. Gold! could it have been gotten for gold, what would I have given for it! Had I a whole world, it had all gone ten thousand times over for this, that my soul might have been in a converted state.

How lovely now was every one in my eyes, that I thought to be converted men and women! They shone, they walked like a people that carried the broad seal of heaven about them.—Oh! I saw the lot was fallen to them in pleasant places, and they had a goodly heritage.—(Psalm xvi.) But that which made me sick, was that of Christ, in St. Mark, *He went up into a mountain, and called to him whom he would, and they came unto him.*—(Mark iii. 13.)

This scripture made me faint and fear, yet it kindled fire in my soul. That which made me fear was this; lest Christ should have no liking for me, for he called whom he would. But oh! the glory that I saw in that condition, did still so engage my heart, that I could seldom read of any that Christ did call, but I presently wished, "Would I had been born in their clothes; would I had been born Peter; would I had been born John; or, would I had been by and had heard him when he called them, how would I have cried, O Lord call me also! But, oh! I feared he would not call me."

And truly, the Lord let me go thus many months together, and showed me nothing; either that I was already, or should be called hereafter. But at last after much time spent, and many groans to God, that I might be a partaker of the holy and heavenly calling; that word came in upon me: *I will cleanse their blood, that I have not cleansed, for the Lord dwelleth in Zion.* (Joel iii. 21.) These words I thought were sent to encourage me to wait still upon God; and signified unto me, that if I were not already, yet time might come, I might be in truth converted unto Christ.

About this time I began to break my mind to those poor people in Bedford, and to tell them my condition; which when they had heard, they told Mr. Gifford of me, who himself took all occasion to talk with me; and was willing to be well persuaded of me, though I think from little grounds: but he invited me to his house, where I should hear him converse with others, about the dealings of God with their souls; from all which I still received more conviction, and from that time began to see something of the vanity and inward wickedness of my heart; for as yet I knew no great matter therein; but now it began to be discovered unto me, and also to work at that rate as it never did before. Now I evidently found, that lusts and corruptions put forth themselves within me, in wicked thoughts and desires, which I did not regard before; my desires also for heaven and life began to fail; I found also that whereas before my soul was full of longing after God, it now began to hanker after every foolish vanity; yea, my heart would not be moved to mind that which was good; it begun to be careless, both of my soul and heaven; it would now continually hang back, both to and in every duty; and was as a clog on the leg of a bird, to hinder him from flying.

Nay, I thought, now I grow worse and worse; now I am further from conversion than ever I was before; wherefore I began to sink greatly in my soul, and began to entertain such discouragement in my heart, as laid me as low as hell. If now I should have burned at the stake, I could not have believed that Christ had a love for me: alas I could neither hear him, nor see him, nor feel him, nor savor any of his things. I was driven as with a tempest, my heart would be unclean, and the Canaanites would dwell in the land.

Sometimes I would tell my condition to the people of God; which, when they heard they would pity me, and tell me of the promises; but they had as good have told me, that I must reach the sun with my finger, as

have bidden me receive or rely upon the promises: and as soon I should have found it: All my sense and feeling was against me: and I saw I had a heart that would sin, and that lay under a law that would condemn.

These things have often made me think of the child which the father brought to Christ, *who while he was yet coming to him, was thrown down by the devil, and also so rent and torn by him, that he lay and wallowed foaming.*

Further, in these days, I should find my heart to shut itself up against the Lord, and against his holy word; I have found my unbelief to set, as it were, the shoulder to the door to keep him out; and that too even then, when I have with many a bitter sigh, cried, *Good Lord, break it open: Lord, break these gates of brass, and cut these bars of iron asunder.* (Psalm cvii. 16.) Yet that word would sometimes create in my heart a peaceable pause, *I girded thee, though thou hast not known me.* (Isaiah xiv. 5.)

But all this while, as to the act of sinning, I was never more tender than now: I durst not take a pin or stick, though but so big as a straw; for my conscience now was sore, and would smart at every touch: I could not now tell how to speak my words, for fear I should misplace them. Oh, how cautiously did I then go in all I did or said! I found myself in a miry bog, that shook if I did but stir, and was, as there left both of God and Christ, and the Spirit, and all good things.

But I observed, though I was such a great sinner before conversion, yet God never much charged the guilt of the sins of my ignorance upon me; only he showed me I was lost if I had not Christ, because I had been a sinner; I saw that I wanted a perfect righteousness, to present me without fault before God, and this righteousness, was nowhere to be found, but in the person of Jesus Christ.

But my original and inward pollution; that, that was my plague and affliction, that I saw at a dreadful rate, always putting forth itself within me; that I had the guilt of, to amazement: by reason of that, I was more loathsome in mine own eyes than a toad, and I thought I was so in God's eyes too; sin and corruption, I said, would as naturally bubble out of my heart, as water would bubble out of a fountain; I thought now, that every one had a better heart than I had; I could have changed hearts with any body; I thought none but the devil himself could equalize me for inward wickedness and pollution of mind. I fell therefore, at the sight of my own vileness deeply into despair, for I concluded that this condition I was in, could not stand with a state of grace. Sure, thought I, I am forsaken of God; sure I am given up to the devil, and to a reprobate mind: and thus I continued a long while, even for some years together.

While I was thus afflicted with the fears of my own damnation, there were two things would make me wonder; the one was, when I saw old people hunting after the things of this life, as if they should live here always: the other was, when I saw professors much cast down, when they met with outward losses: as of husband, wife, child, &c. Lord, thought I, what ado is here about such little things as these! What seeking after carnal things by some, and what grief in others for the loss of them! If they so much labor after, and shed so many tears for the things of this present life, how am I to be bemoaned, pitied and prayed for! My soul is dying, my soul is damning. Were my soul but in a good condition, and were I but sure of it, ah! how rich should I esteem myself, though blessed but with bread and water! I should count those but small afflictions, and should bear them as little burthens. *A wounded spirit who can bear?*

And though I was much troubled, and tossed, and afflicted, with the sight and sense and terror of my own wickedness, yet I was afraid to let this sight and sense go quite off my mind; for I found that unless guilt of conscience was taken off the right way, that is, by the blood of Christ, a man grew worse for the loss of his trouble of mind, than better. Wherefore, if my guilt lay hard upon me, then I should cry that the blood of Christ might take it off; and if it was going off without it (for the sense of sin would be sometimes as if it would die, and go quite away,) then I would also strive to fetch it upon my heart again, by bringing the punishment of sin into hell-fire upon my spirits; and would cry, "Lord, let it not go off my heart, but by the right way, by the blood of Christ, and the application of thy mercy, through him, to my soul;" for that scripture did lay much upon me, *Without shedding of blood there is no redemption.* And that which made me the more afraid of this, was, because I had seen some, who, though they were under the wounds of conscience, would cry, and pray; yet feeling rather present ease for their trouble, than pardon for their sin, cared not how they lost their guilt, so they got it out of their mind: now having got it off the wrong way, it was not sanctified unto them: but they grew harder and blinder, and more wicked after their trouble. This made me afraid, and made me cry unto God the more, that it might not be so with me.

And now I was sorry God had made me man, for I feared I was a reprobate. I counted man, as unconverted, the most doleful of all creatures. Thus being afflicted and tossed about my sad condition, I counted

myself alone, and above the most of men unblessed.

Yea I thought it impossible that ever I should attain to so much godliness of heart, as to thank God that he had made me a man. Man indeed is the most noble by creation, of all creatures in the visible world; but by sin he has made himself the most ignoble. The beasts, birds, fishes, &c.; I blessed their condition, for they had not a sinful nature; they were not obnoxious to the wrath of God; they were not to go to hell-fire after death; I could therefore have rejoiced, had my condition been as any of theirs.

In this condition I went a great while; but when the comforting time was come, I heard one preach a sermon on these words in the Song, *Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair.* But at that time he made these two words, *my love*, his chief and subject matter; from which, after he had a little opened the text, he observed these several conclusions; "1. That the church, and so every saved soul, is Christ's love, when loveless. 2. Christ's love without a cause. 3. Christ's love, which hath been hated of the world. 4. Christ's love when under temptation and under destruction. 5. Christ's love, from first to last."

But I got nothing from what he said at present; only when he came to the application of the fourth particular, this was the word he said: "If it be so, that the saved soul is Christ's love, when under temptation and destruction; then poor tempted soul, when thou art assaulted and afflicted with temptations, and the hidings of face, yet think on those two words, *my love* still."

So as I was going home these words came again into my thoughts; and I well remember, as they came in, I said thus in my heart, "What shall I get by thinking on these two words?" This thought had no sooner passed through my heart, but these words began thus to kindle in my spirit, *Thou art my love, thou art my dove*, twenty times together; and still as they ran in my mind, they waxed stronger and warmer, and began to make me look up; but being as yet between hope and fear, I still replied in my heart, "but is it true, but is it true?" at which that sentence fell upon me, *He wist not that it was true, which was come unto him of the angel.*

Then I began to give place to the word which with power, did over and over make this joyful sound within my soul, *Thou art my love, thou art my love, and nothing shall separate thee from my love.* And with that my heart was filled full of comfort and hope, and now I could believe that my sins would be forgiven me; yea, I was now so taken with the love and mercy of God, that I remember I could not tell how to contain till I got home: I thought I could have spoken of his love, and have told of his mercy to me, even to the very crows that sat upon the ploughed lands before me, had they been capable to have understood me; wherefore I said in my soul with much gladness, well, I would I had a pen and ink here, I would write this down before I go any farther; for surely I will not forget this forty years hence; but alas! within less than forty days I began to question all again; which made me begin to question all still.

Yet still at times I was helped to believe, that it was a true manifestation of grace unto my soul, though I had lost much of the life and savour of it. Now about a week or fortnight after this, I was much followed by this scripture: *Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you:* and sometimes it would sound so loud within me, yea, and as it were, call so strongly after me, that once, above all the rest, I turned my head over my shoulder, thinking verily that some man behind me had called me; being at a great distance, methought he called so loud; it came as I have thought since, to have stirred me up to prayer and to watchfulness; it came to acquaint me, that a cloud and a storm was coming down upon me; but I understood it not.

Also, as I remember, that time that it called to me so loud, was the last time that it sounded in mine ears; but methinks I hear still with what a loud voice these words, *Simon, Simon*, sounded in my ears. I thought, verily, as I have told you, that somebody had called after me, that was half a mile behind me; and although that was not my name, yet it made me suddenly look behind me, believing that he that called so loud meant me.

But so foolish was I, and ignorant, that I knew not the reason of this sound; (which I did both see and feel soon after, was sent from heaven as an alarm, to awaken me to provide for what was coming) only I should muse and wonder in my mind, to think what should be the reason of this scripture, and that at this rate, so often and so loud, it should still be sounding and rattling in mine ears. But as I said before, I soon perceived the end of God therein.

For, about the space of a month after, a very great storm came down upon me, which handled me twenty times worse than all I had met with before; it came stealing upon me, now by one piece, then by another; first all my comfort was taken from me; then darkness seized upon me; after which, whole floods of blasphemies, both against God, Christ, and the scriptures, were poured upon my spirit, to my great confusion and astonishment. These blasphemous thoughts were such as stirred up questions in me against the very being of God, and

of his only beloved Son; as whether there was in truth a God, or Christ? and whether the holy scriptures were not rather a fable and cunning story, than the holy and pure word of God.

The tempter would also much assault me with this, "How can you tell but that the Turks had as good scriptures to prove their Mahomet the Saviour, as we have to prove our Jesus? And, could I think, that so many ten thousands in so many countries and kingdoms, should be without the knowledge of the right way to heaven, (if there were indeed a heaven,) and that we only who live in a corner of the earth, should alone be blessed therewith? Every one doth think his own religion rightest, both Jews and Moors, and Pagans; and how if all our faith, and Christ, and Scriptures, should be but a think so too?

Sometimes I have endeavored to argue against these suggestions, and to set some of the sentences of blessed Paul against them; but alas! I quickly felt, when I thus did, such arguings as these would return again upon me, "Though we made so great a matter of Paul and of his words, yet how could I tell, that in very deed, he being a subtle and cunning man, might give himself up to deceive with strong delusions; and also take the pains and travel, to undo and destroy his fellows."

These suggestions (with many others which at this time I may not nor dare not utter, neither by word or pen) did make such a seizure upon my spirit, and did so overweigh my heart, both with their number, continuance, and fiery force, that I felt as if there was nothing else but these from morning to night within me; and as though indeed there could be room for nothing else; and also concluded, that God had, in very wrath to my soul, given me up to them, to be carried away with them, as with a mighty whirlwind.

Only by the distaste that they gave unto my spirit, I felt that there was something in me that refused to embrace me. But this consideration I then only had, when God gave me leave to swallow my spittle; otherwise the noise, and strength, and force of these temptations would drown and overflow, and as it were bury all such thoughts, or the remembrance of any such thing. While I was in this temptation, I found my mind suddenly put upon it to curse and swear, or to speak some grievous thing against God, or Christ his Son, and of the Scriptures.

Now I thought, surely I am possessed of the devil; at other times, again I thought I should be bereft of my wits; for instead of lauding and magnifying God the Lord, with others, if I have heard him spoken of, presently some most horrible blasphemous thought or other would bolt out of my heart against him; so that whether I did think that God was, or again did think there was no such thing, no love, nor peace, nor gracious disposition could I feel within me.

These things did sink me into very deep despair; for I concluded that such things could not possibly be found amongst them that loved God. I often, when these temptations had been with force upon me, did compare myself to the case of such a child, whom some gipsy hath by force took up in her arms, and is carrying from friend and country; kick sometimes I did, and also shriek and cry; but yet I was bound in the wings of temptation, and the wind would carry me away. I thought also of Saul, and of the evil spirit that did possess him; and did greatly fear that my condition was the same with that of his.

In those days, when I have heard others talk of what was the sin against the Holy Ghost, then would the tempter so provoke me to desire to sin that sin, that I was as if I could not, must not, neither should be quiet until I had committed it; now no sin would serve but that: if it were to be committed by speaking of such a word, then I have been as if my mouth would have spoken that word, whether I would or no; and in so strong a measure was this temptation upon me, that often I have been ready to clap my hands under my chin, to hold my mouth from opening; and to that end also I have had thoughts at other times, to leap with my head downward, into some muck hole or other, to keep my mouth from speaking.

Now again I beheld the condition of the dog and toad, and counted the estate of every thing that God had made, far better than this dreadful state of mine, and such as my companions was. Yea, gladly would I have been in the condition of a dog or horse; for I knew they had no souls to perish under the everlasting weight of hell, or sin, as mine was like to do. Nay, and though I saw this, felt this, and was broken to pieces with it, yet that which added to my sorrow was that I could not find, that with all my soul I did desire, deliverance. That scripture did also tear and rend my soul in the midst of these distractions. *The wicked are like the troubled sea, which cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace to the wicked, saith my God.*

And now my heart was, at times, exceeding hard; if I would have given a thousand pounds for a tear, I could not shed one; no nor sometimes scarce desire to shed one. I was much dejected to think that this would be my lot.—I saw some could mourn and lament their sin; and others again could rejoice and bless God for Christ; and oth-

ers again could quietly talk of, and with gladness remember the word of God, while I only was in a storm or tempest.—This much sunk me, I thought my condition was alone, I should therefore much bewail my hard hap, but get out of, or get rid of these things, I could not.

While this temptation lasted, which was about a year, I could attend upon none of the ordinances of God, but with sore and great affliction. Yea, then was I most distressed with blasphemies; if I had been hearing the word, then uncleanness, blasphemies and despair would hold me a captive there; if I have been reading, then sometimes I had sudden thoughts to question all I read; sometimes again, my mind would be so strangely snatched away, and possessed with other things, that I have neither known, nor regarded, nor remembered so much as the sentence that but now I have heard.

In pray er also I have been greatly troubled at this time; sometimes I have thought I have felt him behind me, pull my clothes; he would also be continually at me in time of prayer, to have done, break off, make haste, you have prayed enough, and stay no longer; still drawing my mind away. Sometimes also he would cast in such wicked thoughts as these, that I must pray to him, or for him: I have thought sometimes of that, *Fall down; or, if thou will fall down and worship me.*

Also, when because I have had wandering thoughts in the time of this duty, I have labored to compose my mind, and fix it upon God; then with greater force hath the tempter labored to distract me, and confound me, and to turn away my mind, by presenting to my heart and fancy, the form of a bush, a bull, a besom, or the like, as if I should pray to these; to these he would also (at sometimes especially) so hold my mind, that I was as if I could think of nothing else, or pray to nothing else but to these, or such as they.

Yet at times, I should have some strong and heart-affecting apprehensions of God, and reality of the truths of his Gospel; but oh! how would my heart, at such times, put forth itself with inexpressible groanings. My whole soul was then in every word; I should cry with pangs after God, that he would be merciful unto me; but then I should be daunted again with such conceits as these; I should think that God did mock at these my prayers, saying, and that in the audience of the holy angels, "This poor simple wretch doth hanker after me, as if I had nothing to do with my mercy but to bestow it on such as he. Alas! poor soul! how art thou deceived! it is not for such as thee to have favor with the Highest."

Then hath the tempter come upon me also with such discouragements as these: "You are very hot after mercy, but I will cool you; this frame shall not last always: many have been as hot as you for a spirit, but I have quenched their zeal," (and with this such and such who were fallen off would be set before mine eyes.) Then I would be afraid that I should do so too; but thought I, I am glad this comes into my mind; well, I will watch, and take what care I can. "Though you do (said Satan) I shall be too hard for you; I will cool you insensibly, by degrees, by little and little. What care I, (saith he) though I be seven years in chilling your heart, if I can do it at last? Continual rocking will lull a crying child to sleep; I will ply it close, but I will have my end accomplished. Though you be burning hot at present, yet I can pull you from this fire; I shall have you cold before it be long."

These things brought me into great straits; for as I at present could not find myself fit for present death, so I thought to live long, would make me yet more unfit; for time would make me forget all, and wear even the remembrance of the evil of sin, the worth of heaven and the need I had of the blood of Christ to wash me, both out of mind and thought; but I thank Christ Jesus, these things did not at present make me slack my crying, but rather did put me more upon it, (like her who met with the adulterer, Deut. xxii. 26.) In which days that was a good word to me, after I had suffered these things awhile: *I am persuaded that neither height, nor death, nor life, shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.* And now I hoped long life would not destroy me, nor make me miss of heaven.

Yet I had some supports in this temptation, though they were then all questioned by me.—That in Jer. iii. at the first was something to me; and so was the consideration of verse 5, of that chapter; and though we have spoken and done all the evil things as we could, yet we should cry unto God, *My Father, thou art the guide of my youth;* and shall return unto him.

I had also a sweet glance from that, *For he hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* I remember that one day, as I was sitting in a neighbor's house, and there very sad at the consideration of my blasphemies; and as I was saying in my mind, What ground have I to think that I, who has been so vile and abominable, should ever inherit eternal life? That word came suddenly upon me, *What shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?* That also was a help to me, *Because I live, ye shall live also.* But these words were but hints, touches, and short visits, though very sweet when present; only they lasted not; but

like to Peter's sheet, of a sudden were caught up from me to heaven again.

But afterwards the Lord did more fully and graciously discover himself unto me, and indeed did quite, not only deliver me from the guilt, that by these things was laid upon my conscience, but also from the filth thereof; for the temptation was removed, and I was put into my right mind again, as other Christians were.

I remember that one day, as I was travelling into the country, and musing on the wickedness and blasphemy of my heart, and considering the enmity that was in me to God, that scripture came into my mind, *He hath made peace by the blood of his cross.* By which I was made to see, both again, and again, that day, that God and my soul were friends by his blood; yea, I saw that the justice of God and my sinful soul could embrace and kiss each other through his blood. This was a good day to me; I hope I shall never forget it.

At another time, as I sat by the fire in my house, and musing on my wretchedness, the Lord also made that a precious word unto me, *Forasmuch then as children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver those who through fear of death, were all their life time subject to bondage.* I thought that the glory of these words was then so weighty on me, that I was both once and twice ready to swoon as I sat; yet not with grief and trouble, but with solid joy and peace.

At this time also I sat under the ministry of holy Mr. Gifford, whose doctrine, by God's grace, was much for my stability. This man made it much his business to deliver the people of God from all those hard and unsound tests, that by nature we are prone to. He bid us to take special heed that we took not any truth upon trust; as from this, or that, or any other man or men; but cry mightily to God, that he would convince us of the reality thereof, and set us down therein by his own Spirit in the holy word; for, said he, if you do otherwise, when temptation comes, if strongly upon you, you not having received them with evidence from heaven, will find you want that help and strength now to resist, that once you thought you had.

This was as seasonable to my soul, as the former and latter rain in their season: for I had found, and that by sad experience, the truth of his words: (for I had felt *no man can say*, especially when tempted by the devil, *that Jesus Christ is Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.*)—Wherefore I found my soul, through grace, very apt to drink in this doctrine, and to incline to pray to God, that in nothing that pertained to God's glory, and my own eternal happiness, he would suffer me to be without the confirmation thereof from heaven; for now I saw clearly, there was an exceeding difference betwixt the notion of the flesh and blood, and the revelation of God in heaven; also a great difference betwixt that faith that is feigned, and according to man's wisdom, and of that which comes by a man's being born thereto of God.

But oh! now how was my soul led from truth to truth by God! Even from the birth and cradle of the Son of God, to his ascension, and second coming from heaven to judge the world.

Truly, I then found upon this account, the great God was very good unto me; for, to my remembrance, there was not any thing that I then cried unto God to make known, and reveal unto me, but he was pleased to do it for me; I mean not one part of the gospel of the Lord Jesus, but I was orderly led into it: methought I saw with great evidence, from the four Evangelists, the wonderful words of God, in giving Jesus Christ to save us, from his conception and birth, even to his second coming to judgment; methought I was as if I had seen him born, as if I had seen him grow up; as if I had seen him walk through the world, from the cradle to the cross; to which also, when he came, I saw how gently he gave himself to be hanged, and nailed on it for my sins and wicked doing. Also as I was musing on this his progress, that dropped on my spirit, *He was ordained for the slaughter.*

When I have considered also the truth of his resurrection, and have remembered that word, *Touch me not, Mary, &c.* I have seen as if he had leaped out of the grave's mouth, for joy that he had risen again, and had got the conquest over our dreadful foes, (John xx. 17.) I have also, in the spirit, seen him a man, on the right hand of God the Father for me; and have seen the manner of his coming from heaven, to judge the world with glory, and have been confirmed in these things by these scriptures, (Acts i. 9, 10, and vii. 56, and x. 42. Heb. vii. 24, and viii. 3. 8. Rev. i. 18. 1 Thes. iv. 17, 18.)

Once I was troubled to know whether the Lord Jesus was a man as well as God, and God as well as man; and truly in those days, let men say what they would, unless I had it with evidence from heaven, all was nothing to me; I counted myself not set down in any truth of God. Well, I was much troubled about this point, and could not tell how to be resolved; at last, that in Rev. v. 6, came into my mind, *And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders stood a Lamb.* In the midst of the

throne, thought I, there is the Godhead; in the midst of the elders, there is his manhood; but oh! methought this did glister! it was a goodly touch, and gave me sweet satisfaction. That other scripture did also help me much in this, *To us a child is born, to us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.*

Also besides these teachings of God in his word, the Lord made use of two things to confirm me in this truth: the one was the errors of the Quakers, and the other was the guilt of sin; for as the Quakers did oppose the truth, so God did the more confirm me in it, by leading me into the scripture that did wonderfully maintain it.

The errors that these people then maintained, were:

1. That the Holy Scriptures were not the word of God.

2. That every man in the world had the Spirit of Christ, grace, faith, &c.

3. That Christ Jesus, as crucified, and dying sixteen hundred years ago, did not satisfy divine justice for the sins of the people.

4. That Christ's flesh and blood was within the saints.

5. That the bodies of the good and bad that are buried in the church-yard, shall not rise again.

6. That the resurrection is past with good men already.

7. That that man Jesus, that was crucified between two thieves, on Mount Calvary, in the land of Canaan, by Judea, was not ascended above the starry heavens.

8. That he should not, even the same Jesus that died by the hands of the Jews, come again the last day, and as man judge all nations, &c.

Many more vile and abominable things were in those days fomented by them, by which I was driven to a more narrow search of the scriptures, and was through their light and testimony, not only enlightened, but greatly confirmed and comforted in the truth; and, as I said, the guilt of sin did help me much; for still as that would come upon me, the blood of Christ did take it off again, and again; and that too sweetly, according to the Scriptures. O friends! cry to God to reveal Jesus Christ unto you; there is none teacheth like him.

It would be too long here to stay, to tell you in particular, how God did set me down in all the things of Christ, and how he did, that he might do so, lead me into his word; yea, and also how he did open them unto me, and make them shine before me, and cause them to dwell with me, talk with me, and comfort me over and over, both of his own being, and the being of his Son, and Spirit, and Word, and Gospel.

Only this, as I said before, I will say unto you again, that in general, he was pleased to take this course with me; first, to suffer me to be afflicted with temptations concerning them, and then reveal them unto me; as sometimes I should lie under great guilt for sin, even crushed to the ground therewith; and then the Lord would shew me the death of Christ; yea, so besprinkle my conscience with his blood, that I should find, and that before I was aware, that in that conscience, where but just now did reign and rage the law, even there would rest and abide the peace and love of God, through Christ.

Now I had an evidence, as I thought, of my salvation from heaven, with many golden seals thereon, all hanging in my sight; now I could remember this manifestation, and the other discovery of grace with comfort; and should often long and desire that the last day were come, that I might forever be inflamed with the sight, and joy, and communion with him, whose head was crowned with thorns, whose face was spit upon, and body broken, and soul made an offering for my sins. For whereas, before I lay continually trembling at the mouth of hell; now methought I was got so far therefrom, that I could not, when I looked back, scarce discern it; and oh! thought I, that I were fourscore years old now, that I might die quickly, that my soul might be gone to rest.

But before I had gone thus far out of these my temptations, I did greatly long to see some ancient godly man's experience, who had writ some hundreds of years before I was born; for those who had writ in our days, I thought (but I desire them now to pardon me) that they had writ only that which others felt; or else had, through the strength of their wits and parts, studied to answer such objections as they perceived others were perplexed with, without going down themselves into the deep. Well, after many such longings in my mind, the God, in whose hands are all our days and ways, did cast into my hand, one day, a book of Martin Luther's: it was his comment on the Galatians; it also was so old that it was ready to fall from piece to piece if I did but turn it over. Now I was pleased much that such an old book had fallen into my hands, the which when I had but a little way perused, I found my condition in his experience, so largely and profoundly handled, as if his book had been written out of my heart. This made me marvel: for thus thought I, this man could not know any thing of the state of Christians now, but must needs write and speak the experience of former days.

Besides, he doth most gravely also in that book, debate of the rise of these temptations namely, blasphemy, desperation, and the like; shewing that the law of Moses, as well as the devil, death, and hell, hath a very great hand therein; the which at first, was very strange to me, but considering and watching, I found it so indeed. But of particulars here I intend nothing; only this methinks I must let fall before all men, I do prefer this book of Martin Luther upon the Galatians (encepting the holy Bible) before all the books that ever I have seen, as most fit for a wounded conscience.

And now I found, as I thought, that I loved Christ dearly: oh! methought my soul cleaved unto him, my affections cleaved unto him; I felt my love to him as hot as fire, and now, as Job said, I thought I should die in my nest; but I did quickly find, that my great love was but little; and that I who had as I thought, such burning love to Jesus Christ, could let him go again for a very trifle: God can tell how to abase us, and can hide pride from man. Quickly after this my love was tried to purpose.

For after the Lord had, in this manner, thus graciously delivered me from this great and sore temptation, and had set me down so sweetly in the faith of his holy Gospel, and had given me such strong consolation and blessed evidence from heaven, touching my interest in his love through Christ; the tempter came upon me again, and that with a more grievous and dreadful temptation than before.

And that was, "to sell and part with this most blessed Christ, to exchange him for the things of this life, for any thing." The temptation lay upon me for the space of a year, and did follow me so continually, that I was not rid of it one day in a month: no, not sometimes one hour in many days together, unless when I was asleep.

And though in my judgment I was persuaded, that those who were once effectually in Christ (as I hoped through his grace I had seen myself,) could never loose him for ever; *For the land shall not be sold for ever, for the land is mine*, saith God: yet it was a continual vexation to me, to think that I should have so much as one such thought within me against a Christ, a Jesus, that had done for me as he had done; and yet then I had almost none others but such blasphemous ones.

But it was neither my dislike of the thought, nor yet any desire and endeavor to resist it, that in the least did shake or abate the continuation or force and strength thereof; for it did always, in almost whatever I thought, intermix itself therewith, in such sort, that I could neither eat my food, stoop for a pin, chop a stick, or cast mine eye to look on this or that, but still the temptation would come, "sell Christ for this, or sell Christ for that; sell him, sell him."

Sometimes it would run in my thoughts, not so little as a hundred times together, sell him, sell him, sell him; against which, I may say, for whole hours together, I have been forced to stand as continually leaning and forcing my spirit against it, lest haply, before I were aware, some wicked thought might arise in my heart, that might consent thereto; and sometimes the tempter would make me believe I had consented to it; but then I should be, as tortured upon a rack, for whole days together.

This temptation did put me in such scares, lest I should at some time, I say, consent thereto, and be overcome therewith, that by the very force of my mind, in laboring to gainsay and resist this wickedness, my very body would be put into action or motion, by way of pushing or thrusting with my hands or elbows; still answering, as fast as the destroyer said sell him: "I will not, I will not, I will not; no, not for thousands, thousands, thousands of worlds;" thus reckoning, lest I should, in the midst of these assaults, set too low a value on him; even until I scarce well knew where I was, or how to be composed again.

In these seasons he would not let me eat my food in quiet; but, forsooth, when I was set at the table at any meat, I must go hence to pray, I must leave my food now, and just now, so counterfeit holy also would this devil be. When I was thus tempted, I would say in myself, "Now I am at meat, let me make an end." "No, said he, you must do it now or displease God, and despise Christ." Wherefore I was much afflicted with these things; and because of the sinfulness of my nature (imagining that these things were impulses from God) I should deny to do it, as if I denied God and then I should not be as guilty, because I did not obey a temptation of the devil, as if I had broken the law of God indeed.

But to be brief: one morning as I did lie in my bed, I was, as at other times, most fiercely assaulted with this temptation, to sell and part with Christ: the wicked suggestion still running in my mind, "sell him, sell him, sell him, sell him," as fast as man could speak: against which also, in my mind, as at other times, I answered "No, no, not for thousands, thousands, thousands," at least twenty times together; but at last, after much striving, even until I was almost out of breath. I felt this thought to pass through my heart "Let him go if he will;" and I thought also, that I felt my heart freely consent thereto. Oh! the diligence of Satan! Oh! the desperateness of man's heart!

Now was the battle won, and down fell I, as a bird that is shot from the top of a

tree, into great guilt, and fearful despair. Thus getting out of my bed I went moping into the field; but God knows, with as heavy a heart as mortal man, I think, could bear; where for the space of two hours, I was like a man bereft of life; and, as now past all recovery, and bound over to eternal punishment.

And withal that scripture did seize upon my soul; "O profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat, sold his birthright: For ye know, how that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

Now I was as one bound, I felt myself shut up unto the judgment to come; nothing now for two years together would abide with me but damnation, and an expectation of damnation; I say, nothing now would abide with me but this, save some few moments for relief, as in the sequel you will see.

These words were to my soul, like fetters of brass to my legs, in the continual sound of which I went for several months together. But about ten or eleven o'clock on that day, as I was walking under a hedge (full of sorrow and guilt, God knows.) and bemoaning myself for this hard hap, that such a thought should arise within me, suddenly this sentence rushed in upon me, *The blood of Christ remits all guilt.* At this I made a stand in my spirit: with that this word took hold upon me, *The blood of Jesus Christ his own Son, cleanseth us from all sin.*

Now I began to conceive peace in my soul, and methought I saw, as if the tempter did leer and steal away from me, as being ashamed of what he had done. At the same time also I had my sin, and the blood of Christ thus represented to me, that my sin, when compared to the blood of Christ, was no more to it, than this little clod or stone before me, is to this vast and wide field that here I see. This gave me good encouragement for the space of two or three hours; in which time also, methought, I saw, by faith, the Son of God, as suffering for my sins; but because it tarried not, I therefore sunk in my spirit, under exceeding guilt again.

But chiefly by the aforementioned scripture concerning *Esau's* selling his birthright: for that scripture would lie all day long in my mind, and hold me down, so that I could by no means lift up myself; for when I would strive to turn to this scripture or that, for relief, still that sentence would be sounding in me: "For ye know, how that afterwards when he would have inherited the blessing, he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

Sometimes, indeed, I should have a touch from that in Luke, *I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not;* but it would not abide with me, neither could I, indeed, when I considered my state, find ground to conceive in the least, that there should be the root of that grace in me, having sinned as I had done. Now was I tore and rent in a heavy case for many days together.

Then began I with sad and careful heart, to consider of the nature and largeness of my sin, and to search into the word of God, if I could in any place espy a word of promise, or any encouraging sentence, by which I might take relief. Wherefore I began to consider that of Mark, *All manner of sins and blasphemies shall be forgiven unto the sons of men wherewithsover they shall blaspheme.* Which place, methought, at a blush, did contain a large and glorious promise for the pardon of high offences; but considering the place more fully, I thought it was rather to be understood, as relating more chiefly to those who had, while in a natural estate, committed such things as there are mentioned; but not to me, who had not only received light and mercy, but that had both after, and also contrary to that, so slighted Christ as I had done.

I feared therefore that this wicked sin of mine, might be that sin unpardonable, of which he there thus speaketh, *But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation.* And I did the rather give credit to this, because of that sentence in the Hebrews: *For you know how that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.* And this stuck always with me.

And now was I both a burden and a terror to myself; nor did I so ever know, as now, what it was to be weary of my life, and yet afraid to die. Oh! how gladly now would I have been any body but myself! any thing but a man, and in any condition but my own! for there was nothing did pass more frequently over my mind, than that it was impossible for me to be forgiven my transgressions, and to be saved from the wrath to come.

And now I began to labour to call again time that was past; wishing a thousand times twice told, that the day was yet to come, when I should be tempted to such a sin; concluding with great indignation, both against my heart, and all assaults, how I would rather have been torn in pieces, than be found a consenter thereto. But alas! these thoughts, and wishings, and resolvings, were now too late to help me; this thought had passed my heart, God hath

let me go and I am fallen. Oh! thought I, *that it was with me as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me!*

Then again being loth and unwilling to perish, I began to compare my sin with others, to see if I could find that any of those that were saved had done as I had done. So I considered *David's* adultery, and murder, and found them most heinous crimes; and those too committed after light and grace received: but yet by considering that his transgressions were only such as were against the law of *Moses*, from which the Lord Christ could, with the consent of his word, deliver him: but mine was against the Gospel; yea, against the Mediator theof, I had sold my Saviour.

Now again, should I be as if racked upon the wheel, when I considered that, besides the guilt that possessed me, I should be so void of grace, so bewitched! What, thought I, must it be no sin but this? Must it needs be the great transgression? Must that wicked one touch my soul? Oh! what sting did I find in all these sentences?

What, thought I, is there but one sin that is unpardonable? But one sin that layeth the soul without the reach of God's mercy; and must I be guilty of that; Must it needs be that? Is there but one sin among so many millions of sin, for which there is no forgiveness; and must I commit this? Oh! unhappy sin! Oh! unhappy man! These things would so break and confound my spirit, that I could not tell what to do; I thought at times they would have broke my wits; and still, to aggravate my misery, that would run in my mind, You know how, that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected. Oh! no one knows the terrors of those days but myself.

After this I began to consider of *Peter's* sin, which he committed in denying his Master; and indeed this came nighest to mine of any that I could find, for he had denied his Saviour, as I after light and mercy received; yea, and that too, after warning given him. I also considered that he did it once and twice; and that after time to consider betwixt. But though I put all these circumstances together, that if possible I might find help, yet I considered again, that his was but a denial of his Master, but mine was a selling of my Saviour. Wherefore I thought with myself, that I came nearer to *Judas*, than either to *David* or *Peter*.

Here again my torment would flame out and afflict me; yes, it would grind me, as it were to powder, to consider the preservation of God towards others, while I fell into the snare; for in my thus considering of other men's sins, and comparing them with mine own, I could evidently see, God preserved them, notwithstanding their wickedness, and would not let them, as he had let me, become a son of perdition.

But oh! how did my soul at this time prize the preservation that God did set about his people! Ah how safely did I see them walk, whom God had hedged in! They were within his care, protection, and and special providence; though they were full as bad as I by nature; yet because he loved them, he would not suffer them to fall without the range of mercy; but as for me, I was gone, I had done it: he would not preserve me, nor keep me; but suffered me, because I was a reprobate, to fall as I had done. Now did those blessed places that speak of God's keeping his people, shine like the sun before me, though not to comfort me, yet to shew me the blessed state and heritage of those whom the Lord had blessed.

Now I saw, that as God had his hand in all the providences and dispensations that overtook his elect, so he had his hand in all the temptations that they had to sin against him; not to animate them to wickedness, but to choose their temptations and troubles for them; and also to leave them for a time, to such things only that might not destroy, but humble them; as might not put them beyond, but lay them in the way of the renewing his mercy. But oh! what love, what care, what kindness and mercy did I now see, mixing itself with the most severe and dreadful of all God's ways to his people! He would let David, Hezekiah, Solomon, Peter, and others fall, but he would not let them fall into sin unpardonable, nor into hell for sin. O! thought I, these be the men that God hath loved; these be the men that God, though he chastiseth them, keeps them in safety by him; and them whom he makes to abide under the shadow of the Almighty. But all these thoughts added sorrow, grief, and horror to me, as whatever I now thought on, it was killing to me. If I thought how God kept his own, that was killing to me; if I thought how I was fallen myself, that was killing to me. As all things wrought together for the best, and to do good to them that were the called, according to his purpose; so I thought that all things wrought for damage, and for my eternal overthrow.

Then, again, I began to compare my sin with the sin of Judas, that, if possible, I might find if mine differed from that, which in truth is unpardonable: and oh! thought I, if it should differ from it, though but the breadth of an hair, what a happy condition is my soul in! And by considering, I found that Judas did his intentionally, but mine was against my prayer and strivings: besides, his was committed with much delib e-ration, but mine in a fearful hurry on a su d-

den. All this while I was tossed to and fro like the locust, and driven from trouble to sorrow; hearing always the sound of Esau's fall in mine ears, and of the dreadful consequences thereof.

Yet this consideration about Judas's sin was, for awhile, some little relief to me; for I saw I had not, as to the circumstances, transgressed so fully as he. But this was quickly gone again, for I thought with myself, there might be more ways than one to commit this unpardonable sin; also I thought there might be degrees of that, as well as of other transgressions; wherefore, for aught I yet could perceive, this iniquity of mine might be such, as might never be passed by.

I was often now ashamed that I should be like such an ugly man as Judas: I thought also, how loathsome I should be unto all the saints in the day of judgment; insomuch that now I could scarce see a good man, that I believed had a good conscience, but I should feel my heart tremble at him, while I was in his presence. Oh! now I saw a glory in walking with God, and what a mercy it was to have a good conscience before him.

I was much about that time tempted to content myself by receiving some false opinions; as, that there should be no such thing as a day of judgment; that we should not rise again; and that sin was no such grievous thing; the tempter suggesting thus: "For if these things should indeed be true, yet to believe otherwise would yield you ease for the present. If you must perish, never torment yourself so much beforehand; drive the thoughts of damning out of your mind by possessing your mind with some such conclusions that Atheist and Ranters use to help themselves withal."

But oh! when such thoughts have led through my heart, how, as it were, within a step, hath death and judgment been in my view! Methought the Judge stood at the door; I was as if it were come already, so that such things could have no entertainment. But methinks I see by this, that Satan will use any means to keep the soul from Christ; he loveth not an awakened frame of spirit; security, blindness, darkness, and error, is the very kingdom and habitation of the wicked one.

I found it a hard work now to pray to God, because despair was swallowing me up; I thought I was as with a tempest driven away from God; for always when I cried to God for mercy, this would come in: "'Tis too late, I am lost, God hath let me fall, not to my correction, but my condemnation; my sin is unpardonable; and I know concerning Esau, how that after he had sold his birthright, he would have received the blessing, but was rejected,"—

About this time I did light on a dreadful story of that miserable mortal, Francis Spira; a book that was to my troubled spirit, as salt when rubbed into a fresh wound; every sentence in that book, every groan of that man, with all the rest of his actions in his dolours, as his tears, his prayers, his gnashing of teeth, his wringing of hands, his twisting, and languishing, and pining away under that mighty hand of God that was upon him, were as knives and daggers in my soul; especially that sentence of his was frightful to me, "Man knows the beginning of sin, but who bounds the issue thereof?" Then would the former sentence, as the conclusion of all, fall like an hot thunderbolt again upon my conscience: For you know how that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

Then would I be struck with a very great trembling, insomuch that sometimes I could, for whole days together, feel my very body, as well as my mind, to shake and totter under the sense of this dreadful judgment of God, that should fall on those that have sinned that most fearful and unpardonable sin. I felt also such a clogging and heat at my stomach, by reason of this my terror, that I was, especially at sometimes, as if my breastbone would split asunder; then I thought concerning that of Judas who by his falling headlong burst asunder, and all his bowels gushed out.

I feared also that this was the mark that God did set upon Cain, even continual fear and trembling, under the heavy load of guilt that he had charged on him for the blood of his brother Abel. Thus did I wind and twine, and shrink under the burthen that was upon me; which burthen also did so oppress me, that I could neither stand nor go, nor lie either at rest or quiet.

Yet that saying would sometimes come into my mind, He hath received gifts for the rebellious: the rebellious, thought I! why surely they are such as once were under subjection to their prince; even those who, after they have once sworn subjection to his government, have taken up arms against him; and this, thought I, is my very condition: I once loved him, feared him, served him; but now I am a rebel; I have sold him, I have said, let him go if he will; but yet he has gifts for rebels; and then why not for me?

This sometimes I thought on, and should labour to take hold thereof, that some, though small refreshment, might have been conceived by me; but in this also I missed of my desire, I was driven with force beyond it; I was like a man going to execution, even by that place where he would

fain creep in and hide himself, but may not.

Again, after I had thus considered the sins of the saints in particular, and found mine went beyond them, then I began to think with myself, and set this case, should I put all theirs together, and mine alone against them, might I not find encouragement? For if mine though bigger than any one, yet should be put equal to all, then there is hopes; for that blood that hath virtue enough in it to wash away theirs, hath virtue enough in it to wash away mine. though this one be full as big, if not bigger than all theirs. Here, again, I should consider the sin of David. of Solomon. of Manasseh, of Peter, and the rest of the great offenders; and should also labour, what I might with fairness to aggravate and heighten their sins by several circumstances.

I should think with myself that David shed blood to cover his adultery, and that by the sword of the children of Ammon; a work that could not be done, but by contrivance, which was a great aggravation to his sin. But then would this turn upon me: Ah! but these were but sins against the law, from which there was a Jesus sent to save them: but yours is a sin against the Saviour, and who shall save you from that?

Then I thought on Solomon, and how he sinned in loving strange women, in falling away to their idols, in building them temples, in doing this after light in his old age, after great mercy received: but the same conclusion that cut me off in the former consideration, cut me off as to this, namely, that all those were but sins against the law. for which God had provided a remedy; but I had sold my Savionr, and there remained no sacrifice for sin.

I would then add to these mens' sins, the sins of Manasseh; how that he built altars for idols in the house of the Lord; he also observed times, used enchantments, had to do with wizards, was a wizard, had his familiar spirits, burned his children in the fire in sacrifice to devils, and made the streets of Jerusalem run down with the blood of innocents. These, thought I, are great sins, sins of a bloody colour, but yet it would turn again upon me, they are none of them of the nature of yours, you have parted with Jesus, you have sold your Saviour.

This one consideration would always kill my heart, my sin was point blank against my Saviour; and that too at that height, that I had in my heart said of him, let him go if he will. Oh! methought this sin was bigger than the sins of a country, of a kingdom, or of the whole world, no one unpardonable; nor all of them together, was able to make mine; mine outwent them every one.

Now I should find my mind to flee from God, as from the face of a dreadful judge, yet this was my torment. I could not escape his hand, It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. But, blessed be his grace, that scripture, in these flying fits, would call, as running after me, I have blotted out, as a thick cloud. thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins; return unto me, for I have redeemed thee. This, I say, would come in upon my mind. when I was fleeing from the face of God; for I did flee from his face; that is, my mind and spirit fled before him; by reason of his highness, I could not endure; then would the text cry, Return unto me; it would cry alound with a very great voice, Return unto me, for I have redeemed thee. Indeed, this would make me make a little stop. and as it were. look over my spoulder behind me, to see if I could discern that the God of grace did follow me with a pardon in his hand; but I could no sooner do that, but all would be clouded and darkened again by that sentence, For you know, how that afterwards when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears. Wherefore I could not refrain, but fled, though at sometimes it cried, Return, return, as it did hollow after me; but I feared to close in therewith, lest it should not come from God; for that other, as I said, was still sounding in my conscience, For you know how that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing he was rejected, &c.

Once as I was walking to and fro in a good man's shop, bemoaning of myself in a sad and doleful state, afflicting myself with self-abhorrence for this wicked and ungodly thought; lamenting also this hard hap of mine, for that I should commit so great a sin, greatly fearing that I should not be pardoned; praying also in my heart, that if this sin of mine did differ from that against the Holy Ghost, the Lord would show it me. And being now ready to sink with fear, suddenly there was, as if there had rushed in at the window, the noise of wind upon me, but very pleasant, and as if I heard a voice speaking, "Didst thou ever refuse to be justified by the blood of Christ?" And withal, my whole life of profession past, was in a moment opened to me, wherein I was made to see, that designedly I had not; so my heart answered groaningly "No." Then fell with power, that word of God upon me, See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. This made a strange seizure upon my spirit; it brought light with it, and commanded a silence in my heart, of all those tumultuous thoughts, that did before use like masterless hell hounds, to roar and bellow, and make an hideous noise within me. It shewed me also that

Jesus Christ had yet a word of grace and mercy for me, that he had not, as I had feared, quite forsaken and cast off my soul; yea, this was a kind of check for my proneness to desperation; a kind of threatening of me, if I did not, notwithstanding my sins, and the heinousness of them, venture my salvation upon the Son of God. But as to my determining about this strange dispensation, what it was, I know not; or from whence it came, I know not; I have not yet in twenty years time been able to make a judgment of it; "I thought then what here I should be loath to speak." But verily that sudden rushing wind was, as if an angel had came upon me, but both it, and the salvation, I will leave until the day of judgment: only this I say, it commanded a great calm in my soul, it persuaded me there might be hope; it shewed me, as I thought, what the sin unpardonable was, and that my soul had yet the blessed privilege to flee to Jesus Christ for mercy. But I say concerning this dispensation, I know not what to say unto it yet; which was also, in truth, the cause that at first I did not speak of it in the book; I do now also leave it to be thought on by men of sound judgment. I lay not the stress of my salvation thereupon, but upon the Lord Jesus in the promise; yet seeing I am here unfolding of my secret things, I thought it might not be altogether inexpedient to let this also shew itself, though I cannot now relate the matter as there I did experience it. This lasted in the savour of it for about three or four days, and then I began to mistrust, and to despair again.

Wherefore still my life hung in doubt before me, not knowing which way I should go; only this I found my soul desire, even to cast itself at the foot of grace, by prayer and supplication. But oh! it was hard for me now, to have the face to pray to this Christ for mercy, against whom I had thus vilely sinned: it was had work, I say, to offer to look him in the face, against whom I had so vilely sinned; and indeed I have found it as difficult to come to God by prayer, after backsliding from him, as to do any other thing. Oh! the shame that did now attend me! especially when I thought, I am now agoing to pray to him for mercy, that I had so lightly esteemed but a while before! I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because this villiany had been committed by me; but I saw that there was but one way with me, I must go to him, and humble myself unto him, and beg that he of his wonderful mercy, would shew pity to me, and have mercy upon my wretched sinful soul.

Which, when the tempter perceived, he strongly suggested to me, "that I ought not to pray to God, for prayer was not for any in my case; neither could it do me good, because I had rejected the Mediator, by whom all prayers came with acceptance to God the Father; and without whom, no prayer could come into his presence.—Wherefore now to pray, is but to add sin to sin; yea, now to pray, seeing God has cast you off, is the next way to anger and offend him more than you ever did before."

"For God," saith he, "hath been weary of you for these several years already, because you are none of his; your bawling in his ears hath been no pleasant voice to him; and therefore he let you sin this sin, that you might be quite cut off; and will you pray still?" This the devil urged, and set forth that in Numbers, when Moses said to the children of Israel, That because they would not go up to possess the land, when God would have them, therefore for ever did he bar them out from thence, though they prayed they might with tears.

As it is said in another place, The man that sins presumptuously shall be taken from God's altar, that he may die; even as Joab was by king Solomon, when he tought to find shelter there. These places did pinch me very sore; yet my case being desperate, I thought with myself, I can but die; and if it must be so, it shall once be said, "That such an one died at the foot of Christ in prayer." This I did, but with great difficulty God doth know; and that because, together with this, still that saying about Esau would be set at my heart, even like a flaming sword, to keep the way of the tree of life, lest I should take thereof and live. Oh! who knows how hard a thing I found it, to come to God in prayer!

I did also desire the prayers of the people of God for me, but I feared that God would give them no heart to do it; yea, I trembled in my soul to think, that some or other of them would shortly tell me, that God hath said those words to them, that he once did say to the prophet, concerning the children of Israel, Pray not for this people, for I have rejected them. So, "Pray not for him, for I have rejected him." Yea, I thought he had whispered this to some of them already, only they durst not tell me so; neither durst I ask them of it, for fear if it should be so, it would make me quite beside myself.—"Man knows the beginning of sin (said Spira;) but who bounds the issues thereof?"

About this time I took an opportunity to break my mind to an ancient christian, and told him all my case; I told him also, that I was afraid I had sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost; and he told me he thought so too. Here, therefore, I had but cold comfort; but talking a little more with him, I found him, though a good man, a stranger to much combat with the devil. Wherefore

I went to God again, as well as I could, for mercy still.

Now also did the tempter begin to mock me in my misery, saying, "That seeing I had thus parted with the Lord Jesus and provoked him to displeasure, who would have stood between my soul and the flame of devouring fire, there was now but one way, and that was, to pray that God the Father would be a Mediator betwixt his Son and me; that we might be reconciled again, and that I might have that blessed benefit in him, that his saints enjoyed."

Then did that scripture seize upon my soul, He is of one mind, and who can turn him? Oh! I saw it was as easy to persuade him to make a new world, a new covenant, or a new Bible, besides that we have already, as to pray for such a thing. This was to persuade him, that what he had done already, was mere folly, and persuade him to alter, yea to disannul the whole way of salvation; and then would that saying rend my sould asunder, Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved.

Now the most free, and full, and gracious words of the Gospel, were the greatest torment to me; yea, nothing so afflicted me, as the thoughts of Jesus Christ, the remembrance of a Saviour; because I had cast him off, brought forth the villainy of my sin, and my loss by it to mind; nothing did twinge my conscience like this; every thing that I thought of the Lord Jesus; of his grace, love, goodness, kindness, gentleness, meekness, death, blood, promises, and blessed exhortations, comforts, and consolations, it went to my soul like a sword; for still unto these my considerations of the Lord Jesus, these thoughts would make place for themselves in my heart. "Aye, this is the Jesus, the loving Saviour, the Son of God, whom you have parted with, whom you have slighted, despised, and abused. This is the only saviour, the only Redeemer, the only one that could so love sinners, as to wash them from their sins in his most precious blood; but you have no part nor lot in this Jesus; you have put him from you; you have said in your heart, let him go if he will. Now therefore you are severed from him; you have severed yourself from him: behold then his goodness, but yourself to be no partaker of it." Oh! thought I, what have I lost, what have I parted with! What has disinherited my soul! Oh! it is sad to be destroyed by the grace and mercy of God; to have the Lamb, the Saviour, turn lion and destroyer.

I also trembled, as I have said, at the sight of the saints of God, especially at those that greatly loved him, and that made it their business to walk continually with him in this world; for they did, both in their words, their carriage, and all their expressions of tenderness and fear to sin against their precious Saviour, condemn, lay guilt upon, and also add continual affliction and shame unto my soul. The dread of them was upon me, and I trembled at God's Samuels.

Now also the tempter began afresh to mock my soul another way, saying "That Christ indeed did pity my case, and was sorry for my loss; but forasmuch as I had sinned and transgressed as I had done, he could by no means help me, nor save me from what I feared; for my sin was not of the nature of theirs, for whom he bled and died; neither was it counted with those that were laid to his charge, when he hanged on a tree; therefore, unless he should come down from heaven, and die anew for this sin, though indeed he did greatly pity me, when yet I could have no benefit of him." These things may seem ridiculous to others, even as ridiculous as they were in themselves, but to me they were most tormenting cogitations: every one of them augmented my misery, that Jesus Christ should have so much love as to pity me, when yet he could not help me; nor did I think that the reason why he could not help me, was, because his merits were weak, or his grace and salvation spent on others already, but because his faithfulness to his threatenings, would not let him extend his mercy to me. Besides, I thought, as I have already hinted, that my sin was not within the bounds of that pardon, that was wrapped up in a promise; and if not, then I knew surely, that it was more easy for heaven and earth to pass away, than for me to have eternal life. So that the ground of all these fears of mine, did arise from a steadfast belief I had of the stability of the holy word of God, and also from my being misinformed of the nature of my sin.

But oh! how this would add to my affliction, to conceit that I should be guilty of such a sin, for which he did not die. These thoughts did so confound me, and imprison me, and tie me up from faith, that I knew not what to do. But oh! thought I, that he would come down again! Oh! that the work of man's redemption was yet to be done by Christ! how would I pray him and entreat him to count and reckon this sin among the rest for which he died! But this scripture would strike me down as dead: Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.

Thus, by the strange and unusual assaults of the tempter, my soul was like a broken vessel driven as with the winds, and tossed sometimes headlong into despair; sometimes upon the covenant of works, and

sometimes to wish that the new covenant and the conditions thereof, might so far forth as I thought myself concerned, be turned another way, and changed, "But in all these, I was as those that jostle against the rocks; more broken, scattered and rent." Oh! the unthought of imaginations, frights, fears, and terrors, that are affected by a thorough application of guilt yielding to desperation! This is the man that hath his dwelling among the tombs with the dead; that is always crying out, and cutting himself with stones. But I say, all in vain; desperation will not comfort him, the old covenant will not save him; nay, heaven and earth shall pass away, before one jot or tittle of the word and law of grace will fail or be removed. This I saw, this I felt, and under this I groaned; yet this advantage I got thereby, namely, a farther confirmation of the certainty of the way of salvation; and that the scriptures were the word of God. Oh! I cannot now express what I then saw and felt of the steadiness of Jesus Christ, the rock of man's salvation; what was done, could not be undone, added to, nor altered. I saw, indeed, that sin might drive the soul beyond Christ, even the sin which is unpardonable; but woe to him that was so driven, for the word would shut him out.

Thus was I always sinking, whatever I did think or do. So one day I walked to a neighboring town, and sat down upon a settle in the street, and fell into a very deep pause about the most fearful state my sin had brought me to; and after long musing, I lifted up my head, but methought I saw, as if the sun that shineth in the heavens did grudge to give light; and as if the stones in the streets, and the tiles upon the houses, did bend themselves against me. Methought that they all combined together to banish me out of the world. I was abhorred of them, and unfit to dwell among them, or be partaker of their benefits, because I had sinned against the Saviour. O how happy now was every creature over I was! For they stood fast, and kept their station, but I was gone and lost.

Then breaking out in the bitterness of my soul, I said to my soul, with a grievous sigh, "How can God comfort such a wretch as I am?" I had no sooner said it, but this returned upon me, as an echo doth answer a voice, "This sin is not unto death." At which I was, as if I had been raised out of the grave, and cried out again, "Lord, how couldst thou find out such a word as this?" For I was filled with admiration at the fitness, and at the unexpectedness of the sentence; the fitness of the word, the rightness of the timing of it, the power, and sweetness, and light, and glory, that came with it also, was marvellous to me to find; I was now, for the time, out of doubt, as to that about which I so much was in doubt before; my fears before were, that my sin was not pardonable, and so that I had no right to pray, to repent, &c. or that if I did it would be of no advantage or profit to me. But now, thought I, if this sin is not unto death, then it is pardonable; therefore from this I have encouragement to come to God by Christ for mercy, to consider the promise of forgiveness, as that which stands with open arms to receive me as well as others. This, therefore, was a great easement to my mind, to wit, that my sin was pardonable, that it was not the sin unto death.—None but those that know what my trouble (by their own experience) was, can tell what relief came to my soul by this consideration; it was a release to me from my former bonds, and a shelter from my former storms: I seemed now to stand upon the same ground with other sinners, and to have as good right to the word and prayer as any of them.

Now I say, I was in hopes that my sin was not unpardonable, but that there might be hopes for me to obtain forgiveness.—But oh! how Satan did now lay about him for to bring me down again! but he could by no means do it, neither this day, nor the most part of the next, for this sentence stood like a mill-post at my back; yet towards the evening of the next day, I felt this word begin to leave me, and to withdraw its supportation from me, and so I returned to my old fears again, but with a great deal of grudging and peevishness, for I feared the sorrow of despair; nor could my faith now long retain this word.

But the next day at evening, being under many fears, I went to seek the Lord, and as I prayed, I cried, and my soul cried to him in these words, with strong cries, O Lord, I beseech, thee, shew me that thou hast loved me with an everlasting love. I had no sooner said it, but with sweetness this returned upon me, as an echo, or sounding again, I have loved thee with an everlasting love. Now I went to bed in quiet; also when I awaked the next morning, it was fresh upon my soul, and I believed it.

But yet the tempter left me not, for it could not be so little as an hundred times, that he that day did labour to break my peace. Oh! the combats and conflicts that I did then meet with; as I strove to hold by this word, that of Esau would fly in my face like lightning; I should be sometimes up and down twenty times in an hour; yet God did bear me out, and keep my heart upon this word; from which I had also, for several days together, very much sweetness, and comfortable hopes of pardon; for thus it was made out unto me, "I loved thee whilst thou wast committing this sin, I loved

thee before, I love thee still, and I will love thee forever."

Yet I saw my sin most barbarous, and a filthy crime, and could not but conclude, with great shame and astonishment, that I had horribly abused the holy Son of God. Wherefore I felt my soul greatly to love and pity him, and my bowels yearn towards him: for I saw he was still my friend, and did reward me good for evil; yea, the love and affection that then did burn within me to my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, did work at this time such a strong and hot desire of revengement upon myself for the abuse I had done unto him, that, to speak as I then thought, had I a thousand gallons of blood within my veins, I could freely then have spilt it all, at the command and feet of this my Lord and Saviour.

And as I was thus musing, and in my studies, considering how to love the Lord, and to express my love to him, that saying came in upon me, If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquity, O Lord, who should stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayst be feared. These were good words to me, especially the latter part thereof; to wit, that There is forgiveness with the Lord that he may be feared; that is, as I then understood it, that he might be loved, and had in reverence; for it was thus made out to me, "That the great God did set so high an esteem upon the love of his poor creatures, that rather than he would go without their love, he would pardon their transgressions."

And now was that word fulfilled on me, and I was also refreshed by it; Then shall they be ashamed and confounded, and never open their mouths any more, because of their shame, when I am pacified towards them for all that they have done, saith the Lord God. Thus was my soul at this time (and as I then did think, forever) set at liberty from being afflicted with my former guilt and amazement.

But before many weeks were gone, I began to despond again, fearing, lest, notwithstanding all that I had enjoyed, that I might be deceived and destroyed at the last; for this consideration came strong into my mind, "That whatever comfort and peace I thought I might have from the word of the promise of life, yet unless there could be found in my refreshment, a concurrence and agreement in the scriptures, let me think what I will thereof, and hold it never so fast, I should find no such thing at the end; for the scriptures cannot be broken."

Now began my heart again to ache, and fear I might meet with a disappointment at last. Wherefore I began with all seriousness to examine my former comfort, and to consider whether one that had sinned as I had done, might with confidence trust upon the faithfulness of God, laid down in these words, by which I had been comforted, and on which I had leaned myself. But now were brought to my mind, For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance. For if we sin wilfully, and after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sin, but certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries; even as Esau, who for one morsel of meat, sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

Now was the word of the Gospel forced from my soul; so that no promise or encouragement was to be found in the Bible for me; and now would that saying work upon my spirit to afflict me, Rejoice not, O Israel, for joy as other people. For I saw, indeed, there was cause of rejoicing for those that held to Jesus; but for me, I had cut myself off by my transgressions, and left myself neither foot-hold nor hand-hold, among all the stays and props in the precious word of life.

And truly, I did now feel myself to sink into a gulf, as an house whose foundation is destroyed; I did liken myself in this condition, unto the case of a child that was fallen into a mill-pit, who though it could make some shift to scrabble and sprawl in the water, yet because it could find neither hold for hand nor foot, therefore at last it must die in that condition. So soon as this fresh assault had fastened on my soul, that scripture came into my heart, *This for many days.* And ineeed I found it was so; for I could not be delivered, nor brought to peace again, until well nigh two years and an half were completely finished. Wherefore these words, though in themselves they tended to no discouragement, yet to me, who feared this condition would be eternal, they were at sometimes as an help and refreshment to me.

For, thought I, many days are not for ever, many days will have an end; therefore seeing I was to be afflicted not a few, but many days, yet I was glad it was but for many days. Thus, I say, I could recal myself sometimes and give myself an help, for as soon as ever the word came into my mind, at first I knew my trouble would be long, yet this would be but sometimes; for I could not always think on this, nor ever be helped by it, though I did.

Now while the scriptures lay before me, and laid sin anew at my door, that saying in Luke xviii. 1. with others, did encourage me to prayer; then the tempter again laid at me very sore, suggesting, "That neither the mercy of God, nor yet the blood of Christ, did at all concern me, nor could they help me for my sin; therefore it was but in vain to pray." Yet, thought I, "I will pray." "But, said the tempter, your sin is unpardonable." "Well, said I, I will pray." "It is to no boot," said he. "Yet, said I, I will pray." So I went to prayer to God; and while I was at prayer, I uttered words to this effect: "Lord, Satan tells me, that neither thy mercy, nor Christ's blood is sufficient to save my soul; Lord, shall I honor thee most, by believing thou wilt, and canst? or him, by believing that thou neither wilt nor canst? Lord, I would fain honor thee, by believing thou wilt, and canst."

And as I was thus before the Lord, that scripture fastened on my heart, *O man, great is thy faith:* even as if one had clapped me on the back, as I was on my knees before God: yet I was not able to believe this, that this was a prayer of faith, till almost six months after; for I could not think that I had faith, or that there should be a word for me to act faith on; therefore I should still be, as sticking in the jaws of desperation, and went mourning up and down in a sad condition.

There was nothing now that I longed for more than to be put out of doubt, as to this thing in question, and as I was vehemently desiring to know, if there was indeed hope for me, these words came rolling into my mind, *Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?* And all the while they run in my mind, methought I had still this as the answer, "'Tis a question whether he hath or no; it may be he hath not." Yea, the interrogatory seemed to me to carry in it a sure affirmation that indeed he had not, nor would so cast off, but would be favourable; that his promise doth not fail, and that he hath not forgotten to be gracious, nor would in anger shut up his tender mercy. Something also there was upon my heart at the same time, which I now cannot call to mind, which, with this text did sweeten my heart, and make me conclude, that his mercy might not be quite gone, nor gone for ever.

At another time I remembered, I was again much under this question, "Whether the blood of Christ was sufficient to save my soul?" in which doubt I continued from morning, till about seven or eight at night; and at last, when I was, as it were, quite worn out with fear, lest it should not lay hold on me, these words did sound suddenly within my heart, "He is able." But methought this word *able*, was spoke so loud to me, it shewed a great word, it seemed to be writ in great letters, and gave such a jostle to my fear and doubt (I mean for the time it tarried with me, which was about a day,) as I never had from that, all my life, either before or after. (Heb. vii. 25.)

But one morning as I was again at prayer, and trembling under the fear of this, that no word of God could help me, that piece of a sentence darted in upon me, *My grace is sufficient.* At this methought I felt some stay, as if there might be hopes; but oh! how good a thing it is for God to send his word! for about a fortnight before, I was looking on this very place, and then I thought it could not come near my soul with comfort, therefore I threw down my book in a pet; then I thought it was not large enough for me; no, not large enough, but now it was as if it had arms of grace so wide, that it could not only enclose me, but many more beside.

By these words I was sustained, yet not without exceeding conflicts, for the space of seven or eight weeks; for my peace would be in it, and out, sometimes twenty times a day, comfort now, and trouble presently; peace now, and before I could go a furlong, as full of fear and guilt as ever heart could hold; and this was not only now and then, but my whole seven weeks' experience.—For this about the sufficiency of grace, and that of Esau's parting with his birthright, would be like a pair of scales within my mind; sometimes one end would be uppermost and sometimes again the other; according to which would be my peace or troubles.

Therefore I did still pray to God, that he would come in with his scripture more fully on my heart; to wit, that he would help me to apply the whole sentence, for as yet I could not: what he gave, that I gathered; but further I could not go, for as yet it only helped me to hope there might be mercy for me, *My grace is sufficient:* and though it came no farther, it answered my former question; to wit, that there was hope; yet because *for thee* was left out, I was not contented, but prayed to God for that also.—Wherefore, one day, when I was in a meeting of God's people, full of sadness and terror, for my fears again were strong upon me, and as I was now thinking my soul was never the better, but my case most sad and fearful, these words did with great power suddenly break in upon me, *My grace is sufficient for thee, My grace is sufficient for thee, My grace is sufficient for thee,* three times together: and oh! methought that

every word was a mighty word unto me; as *my*, and *grace*, and *sufficient*, and *for thee;* they were then, and sometimes are still, far bigger than others be.

At which time my understanding was so enlightened, that I was as though I had seen the Lord Jesus look down from heaven, through the tiles upon me, and direct these words unto me. This sent me mourning home; it broke my heart, and filled me full of joy, and laid me low as the dust; only it stayed not long with me, I mean in this glory and refreshing comfort; yet it continued with me for several weeks, and did encourage me to hope; but as soon as that powerful operation of it was taken from my heart, that other, about Esau, returned upon me as before; so my soul did hang as in a pair of scales again, sometimes up, and sometimes down; now in peace, and anon again in terror.

Thus I went on for many weeks, sometimes comforted, and sometimes tormented; and especially at some times my torment would be very sore, for all those scriptures aforenamed in the Hebrews, would be set before me, as the only sentences that would keep me out of heaven. Then again I should begin to repent that ever that thought went through me; I should also think thus with myself: "Why, how many scriptures are there against me? There are but three or four; and cannot God miss them, and save me for all them?" Sometimes again I should think, "Oh if it were not for these three or four words, now how might I be comforted!" And I could hardly forbear at sometimes, to wish them out of the book.

Then methought I should see as if both St. Peter and Paul, and John, and all the writers, did look with scorn upon me, and hold me in derision; as if they had said unto me, "All our words are truth, one of as much force as the other; it is not we that have cut you off, but you have cast away yourself. There is none of our sentences that you must take hold upon, but these, and such as these; it is impossible, there remains no sacrifice for sin. *And it had been better for them not to have known the will of God, than after they had known it to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them; for the scriptures cannot be broken.*

These as the elders of the city of refuge, I saw, were to be judges both of my case and me, while I stood with the *avenger of blood* at my heels, trembling at their gate for deliverance; also with a thousand fears and mistrusts, I doubted that he would shut me out for ever.

Thus was I confounded, not knowing what to do, nor how to be satisfied in this question, "Whether the scripture could agree in the salvation of my soul." I quaked at the apostles; I knew their words were true, and that they must stand forever.

And I remember one day as I was in divers frames of spirit, and considering that these frames were according to the nature of several scriptures that came in upon my mind; if this of grace, then was I quiet, but if that of Esau, then tormented. Lord, thought I, "if both these scriptures should meet in my heart at once, I wonder which of them would get the better of me." So methought I had a longing mind that they might come both together upon me; yea, I desired of God they might.

Well, about two or three days after, so they did indeed; they bolted both upon me at a time, and did work and struggle strongly in me for awhile; at last that about Esau's birthright began to wax weak, and withdraw, and vanish; and this, about the sufficiency of grace prevailed with peace and joy. And as I was in a muse about this thing, that scripture came in upon me, *Mercy rejoiceth over judgment.*

This was a wonderment to me, yet truly I am apt to think it was of God, for the word of the law and wrath, must give place to the word of life and grace; because, though the word of condemnation be glorious, yet the word of life and salvation doth far exceed in glory. Also that Moses and Elias must both vanish, and leave Christ and his saints alone.

This scripture did also most sweetly visit my soul, *And him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.* Oh! the comfort I had from this word *in no wise!* As who should say, "By no means, for nothing whatever he had done." But Satan would greatly labour to pull this promise from me, telling of me, "That Christ did not mean me, and such as I, but sinners of a lower rank, that had not done as I had done."—But I would answer him again, "Satan, here is in these words no such exception; but him that comes, him, any him: *Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.*" And this I well remember still, that of all the slights that Satan used, to take this scripture from me, yet he never did so much as put this question, "But do you come aright?" And I have thought the reason was, because he thought I knew full well what coming aright was; for I saw that to come aright, was to come as I was, a vile and ungodly sinner, and so cast myself at the feet of mercy, condemning myself for sin. If ever Satan and I did strive for any word of God in all my life, it was for this good word of Christ; he at one end, and I at the other: Oh! what work we made! It was for this in John I say, that we did so tug and strive, he pulled, and I pulled; but God be praised, I overcame him; I got sweetness from it.

But notwithstanding all these helps, and blessed words of grace, yet that of Esau's selling his birthright, would still, at times distress my conscience; for though I had been most sweetly comforted, and that but just before, yet when that came into my mind, it would make me fear again; I could not be quite rid thereof, it would every day be with me. Wherefore now I went another way to work, even to consider the nature of this blasphemous thought; I mean, if I should take the words at the largest and give them their own natural force and scope, even every word therein: so when I had thus considered, I found, that if they were fairly taken, they would amount to this: "That I had fairly left the Lord Jesus Christ to his choice, whether he would be my Saviour or no;" for the wicked words were these, "Let him go if he will." Then that scripture gave me hope, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* "O Lord, said I, but I have left thee." Then it answered again, "But I will not leave thee." For this I thanked God also.

Yet I was grievously afraid he should, and found it exceeding hard to trust him, seeing I had so offended him; I could have been exceeding glad that this thought had never befallen; for then I thought I could with more ease and freedom abundance, have leaned on his grace. I see it was with me, as it was with Joseph's brethren; the guilt of their own wickedness did often fill them with fears that their brother would at last despise them.

Yet above all the scriptures that I yet did meet with, that in Joshua xx. was the greatest comfort to me, which speaks of the slayer that was to flee for refuge, "And if the avenger of blood pursue the slayer, then, saith Moses, they that are the elders of the city of refuge shall not deliver him into his hands, because he smote his neighbor unwittingly, and hated him not aforetime." Oh! blessed be God for his word; I was convinced that I was the slayer; and that the avenger of blood pursued me, I felt with great terror; only now it remained that I inquire, whether I have right to enter the city of refuge: so I found, that he must not, *who lay in wait to shed blood.* It was not the wilful murderer, but he who unwittingly did it, he who did it unawares; not out of spite, or grudge, or malice, he that shed it unwittingly: even he who did not hate his neighbor before. Wherefore.

I thought verily I was the man that must enter, because I had slain my neighbor *unwittingly, and hated him not aforetime.* I hated him not aforetime; no, I prayed unto him, was tender of sinning against him; yea, and against this wicked temptation I had strove for twelve months before; yea, and also when it did pass through my heart, it did in spite of my teeth. Wherefore I thought I had a right to enter this city, and the elders, which are the apostles, were not to deliver me up. This, therefore, was great comfort to me, and gave me much ground of hope.

Yet being very critical, for my smart had made me that I knew not what ground was sure enough to bear me, I had one question that my soul did much desire to be resolved about; and that was, "Whether it be possible for any soul that hath sinned the unpardonable sin, yet after that to re-receive, though but the least true spiritual comfort from God through Christ!" The which, after I had much considered, I found the answer was, "No, they could not;" and that for these reasons:

First, Because those that have sinned that sin, they are debarred a share of the blood of Christ, and being shut out of that, they must needs be void of the least ground of hope, and so of spiritual comfort, *For to such there remains no more sacrifice for sin.* Secondly, Because they are denied a share in the promise of life: *They shall never be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come.* Thirdly, The Son of God excludes them also from a share in his blessed intercession, being for ever ashamed to own them, both before his holy Father and the blessed angels in heaven.

When I had with much deliberation considered of this matter, and could not but conclude that the Lord had comforted me, and that too after my wicked sin; then methought I durst venture to come nigh unto those most fearful and terrible scriptures, with which all this while I had been so greatly affrighted, and on which indeed, before I durst scarce cast mine eye, (yea, had much ado an hundred times, to forbear wishing them out of the Bible,) for I thought they would destroy me; but now, I say, I began to take some encouragement, to come close to them, to read them, and consider them, and to weigh their scope and tendency.

The which when I began to do, I found my visage changed; for they looked not so grimly, as before I thought they did; and first I came to the 6th of the Hebrews, yet trembling for fear it should strike me; which when I had considered, I found that the falling there intended, was a falling quite away; that is as I conceived, a falling from, and absolutely denying of the Gospel, of remission of sins by Jesus Christ; for, from them the apostle begins this argument.—Secondly, I found that this falling away, must be openly, even in the view of the world, even so as to *put Christ to an open shame.* Thirdly, I found that those he there intended, were for ever shut up of God, both in blindness, hardness and impenitency: *It*

is impossible they should be renewed again unto repentance. By all these particulars I found to God's everlasting praise, my sin was not the sin intended.

First, I confessed I was fallen, but not fallen away; that is, from the profession of faith in Jesus unto eternal life.

Secondly, I confessed that I had put Jesus Christ to shame by my sin, but not to open shame; I did not deny him before men, nor condemn him as a fruitless one before the world.

Thirdly, Nor did I find that God had shut me up, or denied me to come (though I find it hard work indeed to come) to him by sorrow and repentance; blessed be God for unsearchable grace.

Then I considered that in the 10th chapter of the Hebrews, and found that the wilful sin there mentioned, is not every wilful sin, but that which doth throw off Christ, and then his commandments too. Secondly, That must be done also openly, before two or three witnesses, to answer that of the law. Thirdly, This sin cannot be committed, but with great despite done to the spirit of grace; despising both the dissuasions from that sin, and the persuasions to the contrary. But the Lord knows, though this my sin was devilish, yet it did not amount to these.

And as touching that in the 12th chapter of the Hebrews, about Esau's selling his birthright; though this was that which killed me, and stood like a spear against me, yet now did I consider, First, That his was not a hasty thought against the continual labour of his mind, but a thought consented to, and put in practice likewise, and that after some deliberation. Secondly, It was a public and open action, even before his brother, if not before many more; this made his sin of a far more heinous nature than otherwise it would have been. Thirdly, He continued to slight his birthright; he did eat and drink, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright; yea, twenty years after he was found to despise it still.

And Esau said, *I have enough my brother, keep that thou hast thyself.*

Now as touching this, that Esau sought a place of repentance; this I thought: First, This was not the birthright, but the blessing; this is clear from the apostle and is distinguished by Esau himself: *He hath taken away my birthright* (that is formerly,) *and now he hath taken away my blessing also.* Secondly, Now this being thus considered, I came again to the apostle, to see what might be the mind of God, in the New Testament style and sense concerning Esau's sin; and so far as I can conceive, this was the mind of God, that the birthright signified regeneration; and the blessing, the eternal inheritance; for so the apostle seems to hint. Lest there be any profane person, as Esau, who for a morsel of meat sold his birthright; as if he should say, that shall cast off all those blessed beginnings of God that at present are upon him, in order to a new birth; lest they become as Esau, even be rejected afterwards, when they should inherit the blessing.

For many there are, who in the day of grace and mercy, despise those things which are indeed the birthright to heaven, who yet when the declining days appear, will cry as loud as Esau, *Lord, Lord, open unto us*, but then, as Isaac would not repent, no more will God the Father, but will say, *I have blessed these, yea, and they shall be blessed;* but as for you, *depart, you are workers of iniquity.*

When I had thus considered these scriptures, and found that thus to understand them, was not against, but according to other scriptures, this still added further to my encouragement and comfort, and also gave a great blow to that objection, to wit, "That the scriptures could not agree in the salvation of my soul." And now remained only the hinder part of the tempest, for the thunder was gone beyond me, only some drops did still remain, that now and then would fall upon me; but because my former frights and anguish were very sore and deep, therefore it oft befel me still, as it befalleth those that have been scared with the fire. I thought every voice was Fire! Fire! Every little touch would hurt my tender conscience.

But one day, as I was passing into the field, and that too with some dashes on my conscience, fearing lest yet all was not right, suddenly this sentence fell upon my soul, *Thy righteousness is in heaven;* and methought withal, I saw with the eyes of my soul, Jesus Christ at God's right hand; there, I say, as my righteousness; so that wherever I was, or whatever I was doing, God could not say to me, "He wants my righteousness," for that was just before him. I also saw moreover, that it was not my good frame of heart that made my righteousness better, nor yet my bad frame that made my righteousness worse; for my righteousness was Jesus Christ himself, *the same yesterday, to-day and forever.*

Now did my chains fall off my legs indeed; I was loosed from my afflictions and irons; my temptations also fled away; so that from that time those dreadful scriptures of God left off to trouble me: now went I also home rejoicing, for the grace and love of God; so when I came home, I looked to see if I could find that sentence, *Thy righteousness is in heaven*, but could not find such a saying; wherefore my heart began to sink again, only that was brought to my remembrance, *He is made unto us of God,*

wisdom, righteousness, santification and redemption. By this word I saw the other sentence true.

For by this scripture I saw that the man Christ Jesus, as he is distinct from us, as touching his bodily presence, so he is our righteousness and sanctification before God. Here therefore I lived, for some time, very sweetly at peace with God through Christ. Oh! methought, Christ! Christ! there was nothing but Christ that was before my eyes: I was now only for looking upon this and the other benefits of Christ apart, as of his blood, burial, or his resurrection, but considering him as a whole Christ! as he in whom all these, and all other virtues, relations, offices, and operations met together, and that he sat on the right hand of God in heaven.

'Twas glorious to me to see his exaltation, and the worth and prevalency of all his benefits, and that because now I could look from myself to him, and would reckon, that all those graces of God that now were green on me, were yet but like those cracked groats and four-pence-half-pennies that rich men carry in their purses, when their gold is in their trunks at home: Oh! I saw my gold was in my trunk at home! In Christ my Lord and Saviour. Now Christ was all; all my righteousness, all my sanctification, and all my redemption.

Further, the Lord did also lead me into the mystery of the union with the Son of God, that I was joined to him, and that I was flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone, and now was that a sweet word unto me, in Ephes. v. 30. By this also was my faith in him, as my righteousness, the more confirmed in me; for if he and I were one, then his righteousness was mine, his merits mine, his victory also mine. Now I could see myself in heaven and earth at once, in heaven by my Christ, by my head, by my righteousness and life, though on earth by body or person.

Now I saw Jesus Christ was looked upon of God; and should also be looked upon by us, as that common or public person, in whom the whole body of his elect are always to be considered and reckoned; that we fulfilled the law by him, died by him, rose from the dead by him, got the victory over sin, death, and hell, by him; when he died, we died; and so of his resurrection. Thy dead men shall live together, with my dead body shall they arise, saith he. And again, After two days he will revive us, and the third day we shall live in his sight. Which is now fulfilled by the sitting down of the Son of man on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, according to that of the Ephesians, He hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

Ah! these blessed considerations and scriptures, with many others of like nature, were in those days made to spangle in mine eye, so that I have cause to say, Praise ye the Lord God in his sanctuary, praise him in the firmament of his power: praise him for his mighty acts; praise him according to his excellent greatness.

Having thus in a few words given you a taste of the sorrow and affliction that my soul went under, by the guilt and terror that these my wicked thoughts did lay me under; and having given you also a touch of my deliverance therefrom, and of the sweet and blessed comfort I met with afterwards, which comfort dwelt above a twelvemonth with my heart, to my unspeakable admiration; I will now (God willing,) before I proceed any further, give you in a word or two, what as I conceive, was the cause of this temptation; and also after that, what advantage at the last, it became unto my soul.

For the causes, I conceived they were principally two; of which two also I was deeply convinced all the time this trouble lay upon me. The first was, for that I did not, when I was delivered from the temptation that went before, still pray to God to keep me from the temptations that were to come; for though, as I can say in truth, my soul was much in prayer before this trial seized me; yet then I prayed only, or at the most principally, for the removal of present troubles, and for fresh discoveries of his love in Christ, which I saw afterwards was not enough to do; I also should have prayed that the great God would keep me from the evil that was to come.

Of this I was made deeply sensible by the prayer of holy David, who, when he was under present mercy, yet prayed that God would hold him back from sin and temptation to come: For then, saith he, shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent of the great transgression. By this very word was I galled and condemned quite through this long temptation.

That was also another word that did much condemn me for my folly, in the neglect of this duty: Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. This I had not done, and therefore was suffered to sin and fall, according to what is written, Pray that ye may not enter into temptation. And truly this very thing is to this day of such weight and awe upon me, that I dare not, when I come before the Lord, go off my knees, until I entreat him for help and mercy against the temptations that are to come; and I do beseech thee, reader, that thou learn to beware of my negligence, by the afflictions,

that for this thing I did for days, and months, and years, with sorrow undergo.

Another cause of this temptation was, that I had tempted God; and on this manner did I do it: Upon a time my wife was great with child, and before her full time was come, her pangs, as of a woman in travail, were fierce and strong upon her, even as if she would have immediately fallen in labour, and been delivered of an untimely birth; now at this very time it was, that I had been so strongly tempted to question the being of God; wherefore, as my wife lay crying by me, I said, but with all secrecy imaginable, even thinking in my heart, "Lord, if now thou wilt remove this sad affliction from my wife, and cause that she be troubled no more therewith this night, (and now were her pangs just upon her,) then I shall know that thou canst discern the most secret thoughts of the heart."

I had no sooner said it in my heart, but her pangs were taken from her, and she was cast into a deep sleep, and so continued till morning; at this I greatly marvelled, not knowing what to think: but after I had been awake a good while and heard her cry no more, I fell asleep also; so when I awaked in the morning, it came upon me again, even what I had said in my heart the last night, and how the Lord had shewed me, that he knew my secret thoughts, which was a great astonishment unto me for several weeks after.

Well, about a year and a half afterwards, that wicked and sinful thought, of which I have spoken before, went through my wicked heart, even this thought, "Let Christ go if he will:" so when I had fallen under guilt for this, the remembrance of my other thought, and of the effect thereof, would also come upon me with this retort, which also carried rebuke along with it, "Now you may see that God doth know the most secret thoughts of the heart."

And with this, that of the passages that were betwixt the Lord and his servant Gideon fell upon my spirit; how because that Gideon tempted God with his fleece, both wet and dry, when he should have believed and ventured upon his words; therefore the Lord did afterwards so try him, as to send him against an innumerable company of enemies, and that too, as to outward appearance, without any strength or help. Thus he served me, and that justly; for I should have believed his word, and not have put an *if* upon the all-seeingness of God.

And now to shew you something of the advantages that I also have gained by this temptation: And, first, by this I was made continually to possess in my soul a very wonderful sense both of the blessing and glory of God, and of his beloved Son; in the temptation that went before, my soul was perplexed with unbelief, blasphemy, hardness of heart, questions about the being of God, Christ, the truth of the word, and certainty of the world to come: I say, then I was greatly assaulted and tormented with atheism, but now the case was otherwise; now was God and Christ continually before my face, though not in a way of comfort, but in a way of exceeding dread and terror. The glory of the holiness of God, did at this time break me to pieces; and the bowels and compassion of Christ did break me as on the wheel; for I could not consider him but as a lost and rejected Christ, the remembrance of which, was as the continual breaking of my bones.

The scriptures also were wonderful things unto me; I saw that the truth and verity of them were the keys of the kingdom of heaven; those that the scriptures favor, they must inherit bliss; but those that they oppose and condemn, must perish for evermore. Oh! this word, For the scriptures cannot be broken, would rend the caul of my heart; and so would that other, Whose sins ye remit, they are remitted; but whose sins ye retain they are retained. Now I saw the apostles to be the elders of the city of refuge, those that they were to receive in, were received to life; but those that they shut out were to be slain by the avenger of blood.

Oh! one sentence of the scripture did more afflict and terrify my mind, I mean those sentences that stood against me (as sometimes I thought every one of them did,) more, I say, than an army of forty thousand men that might come against me. Woe be to him against whom the scriptures bend themselves!

By this temptation I was made to see more into the nature of the promises than ever I had before; for I lay now trembling under the mighty hand of God, continually torn and rent by the thundering of his justice: this made me with careful heart, and watchful eye, with great fearfulness to turn over every leaf, and with much diligence mixed with trembling, to consider every sentence, together with its natural force and latitude.

By this temptation also I was greatly holden off from my former foolish practice of putting by the word of promise when it came into my mind; for now, though I could not suck that comfort and sweetness from the promise, as I had done at other times, yet like to a man sinking, I would catch at all I saw. Formerly I thought I might not meddle with the promise, unless I felt its comfort, but now it was time thus to do; the avenger of blood too hardly did pursue me.

Now therefore was I glad to catch at that word, which yet I feared I had no ground or right to own; and even to leap into the bosom of that promise, that yet I feared did shut its heart against me. Now also I would labor to take the word as God hath laid it down, without restraining the natural force of one syllable thereof. Oh! what did I see in that blessed 6th chapter of St. John: And him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out. Now I began to consider that God hath a bigger mouth to speak with, than I had a heart to conceive with; I thought also with myself, that he spake not his words in haste, or in an unadvised heat, but with infinite wisdom and judgment, and in very truth and faithfulness. (2 Sam. iii. 23.)

I would in these days, often in my greatest agonies, even flounce towards the promise, as the horses do towards sound ground that yet stick in the mire; concluding, though as one almost bereft of his wits through fear, on this will I rest and stay, and leave the fulfilling of it to the God of heaven that made it. Oh! many a pull hath my heart had with Satan, for that blessed 6th chapter of St. John. I did not now, as at other times, look principally for comfort, though O! how welcome would it have been unto me! But now a word, a word to lean a weary soul upon, that it might not sink for ever! it was that I hunted for.

Yea, often when I have been making to the promise, I have seen as if the Lord would refuse my soul for ever, I was often as if I had run upon the pikes, and as if the Lord had thrust at me, to keep me from him, as with a flaming sword. Then would I think of Esther, who went to petition the King contrary to law. (Esther iv. 16.) I thought also of Benhadad's servants, who went with ropes upon their heads to their enemies for mercy. (1 Kings xx. 31.) &c. The woman of Canaan also, that would not be daunted, though called dog by Christ, (Matt. xv. 22.) &c. and the man that went to borrow bread at midnight, Luke i. 5, 6, 7, 8, &c. were also great encouragement unto me.

I never saw those heights and depths in grace, and love, and mercy, as I saw after this temptation; great sins to draw out great grace; and where guilt is most terrible and fierce, there the mercy of God in Christ, when shewed to the soul, appears most high and mighty. When Job had passed through his captivity, he had twice as much as he had before. (Job xlii 13.) Blessed be God for Jesus Christ our Lord. Many other things I might here make observation of, but I would be brief, and therefore shall at this time omit them; and do pray God that my harms may make others fear to offend, lest they also be made to bear the iron yoke as I did. I had two or three times, at or about my deliverance from this temptation, such strange apprehensions of the grace of God, that I could hardly bear up under it; it was so out of measure amazing, when I thought it could reach me, that I do think if that sense had abode long upon me, it would have made me incapable for business.

Now I shall go forward to give you a relation of other of the Lord's dealings with me at sundry other seasons, and of the temptations I then did meet withal. I shall begin with what I met with when I first did join in fellowship with the people of God in Bedford. After I had propounded to the church, that my desire was to walk in the order and ordinances of Christ with them, and was also admitted by them; while I thought of that blessed ordinance of Christ, which was his last supper with his disciples before his death, that scripture, *Do this in remembrance of me*, was a very precious word unto me; for by it the Lord did come down upon my conscience with the discovery of his death for my sins; and as I then felt, did as if he plunged me in the virtue of the same. But behold, I had not been long a partaker at that ordinance, but such fierce and sad temptation did attend me at all times therein, both to blaspheme the ordinance, and to wish some deadly thing to those that then did eat thereof; that lest I should at any time be guilty of consenting to these wicked and fearful thoughts, I was forced to bend myself all the while, to pray to God to keep me from such blasphemies; and also to cry to God to bless the bread and cup to them, as it were from mouth to mouth. The reason of this temptation, I have thought since, was, because I did not with that reverence that became me, at first approach to partake thereof.

Thus I continued for three quarters of a year, and could never have rest nor ease; but at last the Lord came in upon my soul with that same scripture, by which my soul was visited before; and after that, I have been usually very well and comfortable in the partaking of that blessed ordinance; and have, I trust, therein discerned the Lord's body, as broken for my sins, and that his precious blood hath been shed for my transgressions.

Upon a time I was something inclining to a consumption, wherewith about the spring I was suddenly and violently seized, with much weakness in my outward man; insomuch that I thought I could not live. Now began I afresh to give myself up to a serious examination after my state and condition for the future, and of my evidences for that blessed world to come; for it hath, I bless the name of God, been my usual course, as always, so especially in the day

of affliction, to endeavor to keep my interest in the life to come, clear before mine eyes.

But I had no sooner began to recal to mind my former experience of the goodness of God to my soul, but there came flocking into my mind an innumerable company of my sins and transgressions; amongst which these were at this time most to my affliction, namely, my deadness, dullness, and coldness in my holy duties; my wanderings of heart, my wearisomeness in all good things my want of love to God, his ways and people, with this at the end of all, "Are these the fruits of Christianity? Are these the tokens of a blessed man?"

At the apprehensions of these things my sickness was doubled upon me, for now I was sick in my inward man, my soul was clogged with guilt; now also was my former experience of God's goodness to me, quite taken out of my mind, and hid as if they had never been, or seen; now was my soul greatly pinched between these two considerations, "Live I must not, die I dare not." Now I sunk and fell in my spirit, and was giving up all for lost; but as I was walking up and down in the house, as a man in a most woeful state, that word of God took hold of my heart, Ye are justfied freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. But oh! what a turn it made upon me!

Now was I as one awaked out of some troublesome sleep and dream; and listening to this heavenly sentence, I was as if I had heard it thus spoken to me: "Sinner, thou thinkest, that because of thy sins and infirmities, I cannot save thy soul; but behold, my Son is by me, and upon him I look, and not on thee, and shall deal with thee accordingly as I am pleased with him." At this I was greatly enlightened in my mind, and made to understand, that if God could justify a sinner at any time, it was but his looking upon Christ, and imputing of his benefits to us, and the work was forthwith done.

And as I was thus in a muse, that scripture also came with great power upon my spirit, Not by the works of righteousness that we have done, but according to his mercy he hath saved us. Now was I got on high, I saw myself within the arms of grace and mercy; and though I was before afraid to think of a dying hour, yet, now I cried, "Let me die." Now death was lovely and beautiful in my sight, for I saw "We shall never live indeed, till we be gone to the other world." Oh! methought this life is but a slumber, in comparison with that above. At this time also I saw more in these words, Heirs of God, than ever I shall be able to express while I live in this world. Heirs of God! God himself is the portion of the saints. This I saw and wondered at, but cannot tell you what I saw.

Again, I was at another time very ill and weak, all that time also the tempter did beset me strongly, (for I find that he is much for assaulting the soul when it begins to approach towards the grave; then is his opportunity,) labouring to hide from me my former experience of God's goodness: also setting before me the terrors of death, and the judgment of God, insomuch, that at this time, through my fear of miscarrying for ever (should I now die) I was as one dead before death came, and was as if I had felt myself already descending into the pit; methought I said, there was no way, but to hell I must; but behold, just as I was in the midst of those fears, these words of the angel's carrying Lazarus into Abraham's bosom darted in upon me, as who should say, "So it shall be with thee when thou dost leave this world." This did sweetly revive my spirits, and help me to hope in God; which when I had with comfort mused on a while, that word fell with great weight upon my mind, O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory? At this I became both well in my body and mind at once, for my sickness did presently vanish, and I walked comfortably in my work for God again.

At another time, though just before I was pretty well and savoury in my spirit, yet suddenly there fell upon me a great cloud of darkness, which did so hide from me the things of God and Christ, that I was as if I had never seen or known them in my life. I was also so overrun in my soul with a senseless, heartless frame of spirit, that I could not feel my soul to move or stir after grace and life by Christ; I was as if my loins were broken, or as if my hands and feet had been tied or bound with chains.—At this time also I felt some weakness to seize upon my outward man, which made still the other affliction the more heavy and uncomfortable to me.

After I had been in this condition some three or four days, as I was sitting by the fire, I suddenly felt this word to sound in my heart, "I must go to Jesus," at this my former darkness and atheism fled away, and the blessed things of heaven were set within my view. While I was on this sudden thus overtaken with surprise, "Wife," said I, "is there ever such a scripture, *I must go to Jesus?*" She said she could not tell; therefore I stood musing still, to see if I could remember such a place; I had not sat above two or three minutes but that came bolting in upon me, And to an innumerable company of angels; and withal the 12th chapter of Hebrews, about the Mount Sion was set before mine eyes.

Then with joy I told my wife, "O! now

I know, I know!" But that night was a good night to me, I never had but few better; I longed for the company of some of God's people, that I might have imparted unto them what God had shewed me.—Christ was a precious Christ to my soul that night; I could scarce lie in my bed for joy, and peace, and triumph, through Christ. This great glory did not continue upon me until morning, yet the 12th chapter of the Hebrews, was a blessed scripture to me for many days together after this.

The words are these: Ye are come to Mount Sion, to the city of the living God, to the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven; to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Testament, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. Through this sentence the Lord led me over and over, first to this word, and then to that; and shewed me wonderful glory in every one of them. These words also have oft since that time, been great refreshment to my spirit. Blessed be God for having mercy on me.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE AUTHOR'S CALL TO THE WORK OF THE MINISTRY.

And now I am speaking my experience, I will in this place thrust in a word or two concerning my preaching the word, and of God's dealing with me in that particular also. After I had been about five or six years awakened, and helped myself to see both the want and worth of Jesus Chirst our Lord, and also enabled to venture my soul upon him; some of the most able among the saints with us, I say, the most able for judgment and holiness of life, as they conceived, did perceive that God had counted me worthy to understand something of his will in his holy and blessed word, and had given me utterance in some measure, to express what I saw to others, for edification; therefore they desired me, and that with much earnestness, that I would be willing, at sometimes, to take in hand, in one of the meetings, to speak a word of exhortation unto them.

The which, though at the first it did much dash and abash my spirit, yet being still by them desired and entreated, I consented to their request, and did twice, at two several assemblies, but in private, though with much weakness and infirmity, discover my gift amongst them; at which they not only seemed to be, but did solemnly protest, as in the sight of the great God, they were both affected and comforted; and gave thanks to the Father of mercies, for the grace bestowed on me.

After this, sometimes, when some of them did go into the country to teach, they would also that I should go with them; where, though as yet, I did not, nor durst not, make use of my gift in an open way, yet more privately, still, as I came amongst the good people in those places, I did sometimes speak a word of admonition unto them also, the which they, as the other, received with rejoicing at the mercy of God to meward, professing their souls were edified thereby.

Wherefore to be brief, at last, being still desired by the church, after some solemn prayer to the Lord, with fasting, I was more particularly called forth, and appointed to a more ordinary and public preaching of the word, not only to and amongst them that believed, but also to offer the Gospel to those who had not yet received the faith thereof; about which time I did evidently find in my mind a secret pricking forward thereto; though I bless God, not for desire of vain glory, for at that time I was most sorely afflicted with the fiery darts of the devil, concerning my eternal state.

But yet I could not be content, unless I was found in the exercise of my gift, unto which also I was greatly animated, not only by the continual desires of the godly, but also by that saying of Paul to the Corinthians: I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the household of Stephanus, that it is the first fruits of Achaia, that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,) that ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboreth.

By this text I was made to see that the Holy Ghost never intended that men who have gifts and abilities, should bury them in the earth, but rather did command and stir up such to the exercise of their gift, and also did commend those that were apt and ready so to do. They have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints. This scripture, in these days, did continually run in my mind, to encourage me, and strengthen me in this my work for God. I have also been encouraged from several other scriptures and examples of the godly, both specified in the word, and other ancient histories. (Acts viii. 4, and xviii. 24, 25. 1 Peter iv. 10. Rom. xii. 6. Fox's Acts and Monuments.)

Wherefore, though of myself of all the saints the most unworthy, yet I, but with great fear and trembling at the sight of my own weakness, did set upon the work, and

did according to my gift, and the proportion of my faith, preach that blessed Gospel that God has shewed me in the holy word of truth; which when the country understood, they came to hear the word by hundreds, and that from all parts, though upon divers and sundry accounts.

And I thank God, that he gave unto me some measure of bowels and pity for their souls, which also did put me forward to labour, with great diligence and earnestness, to find out such a word as might, if God would bless it, lay hold of, and awaken the conscience, in which also the good Lord had respect to the desire of his servant; for I had not preached long, before some began to be touched, and greatly afflicted in their minds at the apprehension of the greatness of their sin, and of their need of Jesus Christ.

But I first could not believe that God should speak by me to the heart of any man, still counting myself unworthy; yet those who were thus touched, would love me, and have a particular respect for me; and though I did put it from me, that they should be awakened by me, still they would confess it, and affirm it before the saints of God; they would also bless God for me, (unworthy wretch that I am!) and count me God's instrument that shewed to them the way of salvation.

Wherefore seeing them in both their words and deeds to be so constant, and also in their hearts so earnestly pressing after the knowledge of Jesus Christ, rejoicing that ever God did send me where they were; then began I to conclude it might be so, that God had owned in his work such a foolish one as I, and then came that word of God to my heart, with much sweet refreshment, The blessing of them that were ready to perish is come upon me; yea I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.

At this therefore, I rejoiced; yea, the tears of those whom God did awaken by my preaching would be both solace and encouragement to me; I thought on those sayings, Who is he that maketh me glad, but the same that is made sorry by me? And again, Though I be not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am unto you; for the seal of my apostleship are ye in the Lord. These things therefore, were as another argument unto me, that God had called me to, and stood by me in this work.

In my preaching of the word, I took special notice of this one thing, namely, that the Lord did lead me to begin where his word begins with sinners; that is, to condemn all flesh, and to open and allege, that the curse of God by the law, doth belong to, and lay hold on all men as they come into the world, because of sin. Now this part of my work I fulfilled with great sense; for the terrors of the law, and the guilt of my transgressions, lay heavy on my conscience; I preached what I felt, what I smartingly did feel; even that under which my poor soul did groan and tremble to astonishment.

Indeed, I have been as one sent to them from the dead; I went myself in chains, to preach to them in chains; and carried that fire in my own conscience, that I persuaded them to be aware of. I can truly say, and that without dissembling, that when I have been to preach, I have gone full of guilt and terror, even to the pulpit door, and there it hath been taken off, and I have been at liberty in my mind until I have done my work; and then immediately, even before I could get down the pulpit stairs, I have been as bad as I was before: yet God carried me on, but surely with a strong hand, for neither guilt nor hell could take me off my work.

Thus I went on for the space of two years, crying out against men's sins, and their fearful state because of them. After which the Lord came in upon my soul with some sure peace and comfort through Christ; for he did give me many sweet discoveries of his blessed grace through him. Wherefore now I altered in my preaching, (for still I preached what I saw and felt;) now therefore I did much labor to hold forth Jesus Christ in all his offices, relations, and benefits unto the world, and did strive also to discover, to condemn, and remove those false supports and props on which the world doth lean, and by them fall and perish.—On these things also I stayed as long as on the other.

After this, God led me into something of the mystery of the union of Christ; wherefore that I discovered and shewed to them also. And when I had travelled through these three chief points of the word of God, about the space of five years or more, I was caught in my present practice, and cast into prison, where I have lain above as long again to confirm the truth by way of suffering, as I was before in testifying of it according to the scriptures, in a way of preaching.

When I have been preaching, I thank God, my heart hath often all the time of this and the other exercise, with great earnestness cried to God that he would make the word effectual to the salvation of the soul; still being grieved lest the enemy should take the word away from the conscience, and so it should become unfruitful; wherefore I should labor so to speak the word, as that thereby, if it were possible, the sin and person guilty might be particularized by it.

Also when I have done the exercise, it hath gone to my heart, to think the word

should now fall as rain on stony places; still wishing from my heart, Oh! that they who have heard me speak this day, did but see as I do, what sin, death, hell, and the curse of God is; and also what the grace, and love, and mercy of God is, through Christ, to men in such a case as they are, who are yet estranged from him. And indeed I did often say in my heart before the Lord, "That if to be hanged up presently before their eyes, would be a means to awaken them, and confirm them, in the truth, I gladly should be contented."

For I have been in my preaching, especially when I have been engaged in the doctrine of life by Christ without works, as if an angel of God had stood by at my back to encourage me; Oh! it hath been with such power and heavenly evidence upon my own soul, while I have been laboring to unfold it, to demonstrate it, and to fasten it upon the consciences of others, that I could not be contented with saying, "I believe, and am sure;" methought I was more than sure (if it be lawful to express myself,) that those things which then I asserted, were true.

When I first went to preach the word abroad, the doctors and priests of the country did open wide against me; but I was persuaded of this, not to render railing for railing; but to see how many of their carnal professors I could convince of their miserable state by the law, and of the want and worth of Christ; for, thought I, This shall answer for me in time to come, when they shall be for my hire before their face.

I never cared to meddle with things that were controverted, and in dispute among the saints, especially things of the lowest nature; yet it pleased me much to contend with great earnestness for the word of faith, and the remission of sins by the death and sufferings of Jesus: but I say, as to other things, I should let them alone, because I saw they engendered strife, and because that they neither in doing, nor in leaving undone, did commend us to God to be his; besides, I saw my work before me did run in another channel, even to carry an awakening word; to that therefore I did stick and adhere.

I never endeavored to, nor durst make use of other men's lines, (Rom. xv. 18) (though I do not condemn all that do;) for I verily thought, and found by experience that what was taught me by the word and Spirit of Christ, could be spoken, maintained, and stood to by the soundest and best established conscience; and though I will not now speak all that I know in this matter, yet my experience hath more interest in that text of scripture, (Gal. i. 11, 12,) than many amongst men are aware.

If any of those who were awakened by my ministry, did after that fall back, (as sometimes too many did) I can truly say, their loss hath been more to me, than if my own children, begotten of my own body, had been going to the grave. I think verily, I may speak it without any offence to the Lord, nothing has gone so near me as that; unless it was the fear of the loss of the salvation of my own soul. I have counted as if I had goodly buildings and lordships in those places where my children were born: my heart hath been so wrapped up in the glory of this excellent work, that I counted myself more blessed and honored of God by this, than if he had made me emperor of the christian world, or the lord of all the glory of the earth without it! Oh these words! He that converteth a sinner from the error of his way, doth save a soul from death. The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise. They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever. For what is our hope, our joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not ye even in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy. These, I say, with many others of a like nature, have been great refreshments to me.

I have observed, that where I have had a work to do for God, I have had first, as it were, the going of God upon my spirit, to desire I might preach there: I have also observed, that such and such souls in particular, have been strongly set upon my heart, and I stirred up to wish for their salvation; and that these very souls have, after this, been given in as the fruits of my ministry. I have observed, that a word cast in by the by, hath done more execution in a sermon, than all that was spoken besides; sometimes also, when I have thought I did no good, then I did the most of all; and at other times, when I thought I should catch them, I have fished for nothing.

I have also observed, that where there has been a work to do upon sinners, there the devil hath begun to roar in the hearts and by the mouths of his servants; yea, often times, when the wicked world hath raged most, there hath been souls awakened by the word; I could instance particulars, but I forbear.

My great desire in my fulfilling my ministry was to get into the darkest places of the country, even amongst those people that were farthest off of profession; yet not because I could not endure the light (for I feared not to shew my Gospel to any,) but because I found my spirit did lean most after awakening and converting work, and

the word that I carried did lean itself most that way also: Yea so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation.

In my preaching I have really been in pain, and have as it were, travailed to bring forth children to God; neither could I be satisfied unless some fruits did appear in my work. If I were fruitless it mattered not who commended me; but if I were fruitful, I cared not who did condemn. I have thought of that, Lo! children are an heritage of the Lord; and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows in the hands of a mighty man, so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath filled his quiver full of them; they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.

It pleased me nothing to see people drink in my opinions, if they seemed ignorant of Jesus Christ, and the worth of their own salvation, sound conviction for sin, especially unbelief, and an heart set on fire to be saved by Christ, with strong breathings after a truly sanctified soul; that it was that delighted me; those were the souls I counted blessed.

But in this work, as in all other, I had my temptations attending me, and that of divers kinds; as sometimes I should be assaulted with great discouragement therein, fearing that I should not be able to speak a word at all to edification; nay, that I should not be able to speak sense to the people; at which times I should have such a strange faintness and strengthlessness seize upon my body, that my legs have scarce been able to carry me to the place of exercise.

Sometimes again, when I have been preaching, I have been violently assaulted with thoughts of blasphemy, and strongly tempted to speak the words with my mouth before the congregation. I have also at sometimes, even when I have begun to speak the word with much clearness, evidence, and liberty of speech, yet been before the ending of that opportunity, so blinded and so estranged from the things I have been speaking, and have been also so straitened in my speech, as to utterance before the people, that I have been as if I had not known, or remembered what I have been about; or as if my head had been in a bag all the time of my exercise.

Again, when as sometimes I have been about to preach upon some smart and searching portion of the word, I have found the tempter suggest, "What! will you preach this! This condemns yourself; of this your own soul is guilty; wherefore, preach not this at all; or if you do, so mince it as to make way for your own escape; lest instead of awakening others, you lay that guilt upon your own soul, that you will never get from under."

But I thank the Lord, I have been kept from consenting to these so horrid suggestions, and have, rather as Samson, bowed myself with all my might, to condemn sin and transgression wherever I found it; yea, though therein also, I did bring guilt upon my own conscience. Let me die, thought I, with the Philistines, rather than deal corruptly with the blessed word of God.—Thou that teachest another, teachest not thou thyself? It is far better that thou do judge thyself, even by preaching plainly to others, than that thou, to save thyself, imprison the truth in unrighteousness. Blessed be God for help in this also.

I have also, while found in this blessed work of Christ, been often tempted to pride and liftings up of heart; and though I dare not say I have not been affected with this, yet truly the Lord, of his precious mercy, hath so carried it towards me, that for the most part I have had but small joy to give way to such a thing; for it hath been my every day's portion, to be let into the evil of my own heart, and still made to see such a multitude of corruptions and infirmities therein, that it hath caused hanging down of the head, under all my gifts and attainments. I have felt this thorn in the flesh, the very mercy of God to me.

I have had also together with this, some notable place or other of the word presented before me, which word hath contained in it some sharp and piercing sentence concerning the perishing of the soul, notwithstanding gifts and parts; as for instance, that hath been of great use to me, Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels, and have not charity, I am become as a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal.

A tinkling cymbal is an instrument of music with which a skillful player can make such melodious and heart-inflaming music, that all who hear him play, can scarcely hold from dancing; and yet behold the cymbal hath not life, neither comes the music from it, but because of the art of him that plays therewith; so then the instrument at last may come to naught and perish, though in times past such music hath been made upon it.

Just thus I saw it was, and will be, with them that have gifts, but want saving grace; they are in the hand of Christ, as the cymbal in the hand of David; and as David could with the cymbal make that mirth in the service of God, as to elevate the hearts of the worshippers, so Christ can use these gifted men, as with them to affect the souls of his people in his church; yet when he hath done all, hang them by, as lifeless, though sounding cymbals.

This consideration therefore, together with some others, were for the most part, as a maul on the head of pride, and desire of vain glory. What, thought I, shall I be proud because I am a sounding brass? Is it so much to be a fiddle? Hath not the least creature that hath life, more of God in it than these? Besides, I knew it was love should never die, but these must cease and vanish; so I concluded, a little grace, a little love, a little of the true fear of God, is better than all the gifts; yea, and I am fully convinced of it, that it is possible for souls that can scarce give a man an answer, but with great confusion as to method; I say it is possible for them to have a thousand times more grace, and to be more in the love and favor of the Lord, than some who by the virtue of the gift of knowledge, can deliver themselves like angels.

Thus therefore I came to perceive, that though gifts in themselves were good, to the thing for which they are designed, to wit, the edification of others, yet empty, and without power to save the soul of him that hath them if they be alone. Neither are they, as so, any sign of a man's state to be happy, being only a dispensation of God to some, of whose improvement, or non-improvement, they must when a little love more is over, give an account to him that is ready to judge the quick and dead.

This shewed me too, that gifts being alone, were dangerous, not in themselves, but because of those evils that attend them that have them, to wit, pride, desire of vain glory, self-conceit, &c., all which are easily blown up at the applause and condemnation of every unadvised christian, to the endangering of a poor creature to fall into the condemnation of the devil.

I saw therefore, that he that hath gifts, had need to be let into a sight of the nature of them, to wit, that they come short of making of him to be in a truly saved condition, lest he rest in them, and so fall short of the grace of God.

He hath cause also to walk humbly with God and be little in his own eyes, and to remember withal, that his gifts are not his own, but the church's; and that by them he is made a servant to the church; and he must give at last an account of his stewardship unto the Lord Jesus, and to give a good account will be a blessed thing.

Let all men therefore, prize a little with the fear of the Lord, (gifts indeed are desirable) but yet grace and smaller gifts are better than great gifts and no grace. It doth not say, the Lord gives gifts and glory, but the Lord gives grace and glory; and blessed is such an one, to whom the Lord gives grace, true grace, for that is a certain forerunner of glory.

But when Satan perceived that his thus tempting and assaulting me, would not answer his design; to wit, to overthrow the ministry, and make it ineffectual, as to the ends thereof; then he tried another way, which was, to stir up the minds of the ignorant and malicious to load me with slanders and reproaches: now therefore, I may say, that what the devil could devise, and his instruments invent, was whirled up and down the country against me, thinking, as I said, that by that means they should make my ministry to be abandoned.

It began therefore to be rumoured up and down among the people, that I was a witch, a jesuit, a highwayman, and the like.

To all which, I shall only say; God knows that I am innocent. But as for mine accusers, let them provide themselves to meet me before the tribunal of the Son of God, there to answer for all these things, with all the rest of their iniquities, unless God shall give them repentance for them, for the which I pray with all my heart.

But that which was reported with the boldest confidence, was that I had my misses, my whores, my bastards, yea, two wives at once, and the like. Now these slanders, with the other, I glory in, because but slanders, foolish or knavish lies, and falsehoods cast upon me by the devil and his seed.—And should I not be dealt with thus wickedly by the world, I should want one sign of a saint, and a child of God. Blessed are ye, said the Lord Jesus, when men shall revile, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil of you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

These things therefore, upon my own account troubled me not; no, though they were twenty times more than they are. I have a good conscience, and whereas they speak evil of me, as an evil doer, they shall be ashamed that falsely accuse my good conversation in Christ.

So then, what shall I say to those who have thus bespattered me? Shall I threaten them? Shall I chide them? Shall I flatter them? Shall I entreat them to hold their tongues? No, not I. Were it not for that these things make them ripe for damnation that are the authors and abettors, I would say unto them, "Report it," because it will increase my glory.

Therefore I bind these lies and slanders to me as an ornament; it belongs to my christian profession to be villified, slandered, reproached, and reviled; and since all this is nothing else, as my God and my conscience do bear me witness, I rejoice in reproaches for Christ's sake.

Now, as Satan endeavored, by reproaches and slanders to make me vile among my

countrymen, that, if possible, my preaching might be made of none effect; so there was added hereto a long and tedious imprisonment, that thereby I might be frightened from the service of Christ, and the world terrified and made afraid to hear me preach. Of which I shall in the next place give you a brief account.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE AUTHOR'S IMPRISONMENT.

Having made profession of the glorious Gospel of Christ a long time, and preached the same about five years, I was apprehended at a meeting of good people in the country; among whom had they let me alone I should have preached that day; but they took me away from amongst them, and had me before a justice: who, after I had offered security for my appearing the next sessions, yet committed me, because my sureties would not consent to be bound, that I should preach no more to the people.

At the sessions after, I was indicted for an upholder and maintainer of unlawful assemblies and conventicles, and for not conforming to the national worship of the Church of England; and after some conference there with the justices, they taking my plain dealing with them for a confession, as they termed it, of the indictment, did sentence me to a perpetual banishment, because I refused to conform. So being again delivered up to the gaoler's hands, I was had home to prison, and there have lain now complete twelve years, waiting to see what God would suffer these men to do with me.

In which condition I have continued with much content, through grace; but have met with many turnings and goings upon my heart, both from the Lord, Satan, and my own corruptions: by all which, glory be to Jesus Christ, I have also received, among many things, much conviction, instruction, and understanding; of which at large I shall not here discourse; only give you a hint or two, a word that may stir up the godly to bless God and to pray for me; and also to take encouragement, should the case be their own, not to fear what man can do unto them.

I never had in all my life so great an inlet into the word of God as now. Those scriptures that I saw nothing in before, are made in this place and state to shine upon me. Jesus Christ also was never more real and apparent than now: here I have seen and felt him indeed. O that word! We have not preached unto you cunningly devised fables; and that, God raised Christ from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God, were blessed words unto me, in this my imprisoned condition.

These three or four scriptures also have been great refreshments in this condition to me, (John xiv. 1, 2, 3, 4. John xvi. 33. Col. iii. 3, 4. Heb. xii. 22, 23, 24.) So that sometimes, when I have been in the savour of them, I have been able to laugh at destruction, and to fear neither the horse nor his rider. I have had sweet sights of the forgiveness of my sins in this place, and of my being with Jesus in another world. O the Mount Sion, the heavenly Jerusalem, the innumerable company of angels and God the Judge of all, and the spirits of just men made perfect, and Jesus, have been sweet unto me in this place! I have seen that here, which I am persuaded I shall never, while in this world, be able to express. I have seen a truth in this scripture, Whom having not seen ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.

I never knew what it was for God to stand by me at all turns, and at every offer of Satan to afflict me, &c.; as I have found him since I came in hither; for look how fears have presented themselves, so have supports and encouragements; yea, when I have started, even as it were at nothing else but my shadow, yet God, as being very tender of me, hath not suffered me to be molested, but would, with one scripture or another, strengthen me against all, insomuch that I have often said, Were it lawful, I could pray for greater trouble, for the greater comfort's sake.

Before I came to prison, I saw what was a-coming; and had especially two considerations warm upon my heart. The first was, how to be able to encounter death, should that be here my portion. For the first of these, that scripture was great information to me, namely, to pray to God to be strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long suffering with joyfulness; I could seldom go to prayer before I was imprisoned, but for not so little as a year together, this sentence, or sweet petition, would, as it were, thrust itself into my mind, and persuade me, that if ever I would go through long suffering I must have patience, espepecially if I would endure it joyfully.

As to the second consideration, that saying was of great use to me, But we had the sentence of death in ourselves that we might not trust in ourselves, but in God that raiseth the dead. By this scripture I was made to see, that if ever I would suffer rightly, I must first pass a sentence of death

upon every thing that can properly be called a thing of this life; even to reckon myself, my wife, my children, my health, my enjoyments, and all as dead to me, and myself as dead to them.

The second was, to live upon God that is invisible; as Paul said in another place, the way not to be faint is, to look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. And thus I reasoned with myself: If I provide only for a prison then the whip comes at unawares; and so doth also the pillory. Again, if I only provide for these, then I am not fit for banishment. Further, if I conclude that banishment is the worst, then if death come I am surprised. So that I see the best way to go through sufferings, is to trust in God through Christ, as touching the world to come; and as touching this world, to count the grave my house, to make my bed in darkness, and to say to corruption, Thou art my father; and to the worm, thou art my mother and sister; that is, to familiarise these things to me.

But notwithstanding these helps, I found myself a man encompassed with infirmities. The parting with my wife and poor children hath often been to me, in this place, as the pulling the flesh from my bones; and that not only because I am somewhat too fond of these mercies, but also because I should have often brought to my mind the many hardships, miseries, and wants that my poor family was likewise to meet with; especially my poor blind child, who lay nearer my heart than all I had beside. Oh! the thoughts of the hardships I thought my blind one might go under, would break my heart to pieces.

Poor child, thought I, what sorrow art thou like to have for thy portion in this world! Thou must be beaten, must beg, suffer hunger, cold, nakedness, and a thousand calamities, though I cannot now endure the wind should blow upon thee. But yet recalling myself, thought I, I must venture you all with God, though it goeth to the quick to leave you. Oh! I saw in this condition I was as a man who was pulling down his house upon the head of his wife and children; yet thought I, I must do it, I must do it. And now I thought on those two milch kine that were to carry the ark of God into another country, to leave their calves behind them.

But that which helped me in this temptation, was divers considerations, of which three in special here I will name. The first was, the consideration of those two scriptures, Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive, and let thy widows trust in me: and again, The Lord said, Verily it shall go well with thy remnant: verily, I will cause the enemy to entreat thee well in the time of evil, &c.

I had also this consideration, that if I should now venture all for God, I engaged God to take care of my concernments; but if I forsook him and his ways, for fear of any trouble that should come to me or mine, then I should not only falsify my profession but should count also that my concernments were not so sure, if left at God's feet, whilst I stood to and for his name, as they would be, if they were under my own care, though with the denial of the way of God. This was a smarting consideration, and as spurs unto my flesh. That scripture also greatly helped it to fasten the more upon me, where Christ prays against Judas, that God would disappoint him in his selfish thoughts, which moved him to sell his master. Pray read it soberly. (Psl. cix. 6, 7, 8, &c.)

I had also another consideration, and that was, the dread of the torments of hell, which I was sure they must partake of, that for fear of the cross, do shrink from their profession of Christ, his words and laws, before the sons of men. I thought also of the glory that he had prepared for those that in faith, and love, and patience, stood to his ways before them. These things, I say, have helped me, when the thoughts of the misery that both myself and mine, might for the sake of my profession, be exposed to, hath lain pinched on my mind.

When I have indeed conceited, that I might be banished for my profession, then I have thought of that scripture, They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheep-skins, and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented; of whom the world was not worthy; for all they thought they were two bad to dwell and abide amongst them. I have also thought of that saying, The Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, that bonds and afflictions abide me. I have verily thought, that my soul and it have sometimes reasoned about the sore and sad estate of a banished and exiled condition, how they are exposed to hunger, to cold, to perils, to nakedness, to enemies, and a thousand calamities; and at last, it may be to die in a ditch, like a poor, forlorn, and desolate sheep. But I thanked God, hitherto I have not been moved by these most delicate reasonings, but rather by them more approved my heart to God.

I will tell you a pretty business: I was once above all the rest, in a very sad and low condition for many weeks, at which time also I being but a young prisoner, and not acquainted with the laws, had this lain much upon my spirit, "That my imprisonment might end at the gallows for aught

that I could tell." Now therefore Satan laid hard at me, to beat me out of heart, by suggesting thus unto me: "But how if, when you come indeed to die, you should be in this condition; that is, as not to savour the things of God, nor to have any evidence upon your soul for a better state hereafter?" for indeed at that time all the things of God were hid from my soul.

Wherefore, when I at first began to think of this, it was a great trouble to me; for I thought with myself, that in the condition I now was, I was not fit to die; neither indeed did think I could, if I should be called to it; besides, I thought with myself, if I should make a scrambling shift to clamber up the ladder, yet I should, either with quaking, or other symptoms of fainting, give occasion to the enemy to reproach the way of God and his people, for their timorousness. This therefore lay with great trouble upon me; for methought I was ashamed to die with a pale face, and tottering knees in such a case as this.

Wherefore I prayed to God, that he would comfort me, and give strength to do and suffer what he should call me to. Yet no comfort appeared, but all continued hid. I was also at this time so really possessed with the thought of death, that oft I was as if on a ladder with a rope about my neck. Only this was some encouragement to me, I thought I might now have an opportunity to speak my last words unto a multitude which I thought would come to see me die; and, thought I, if it must be so, if God will but convert one soul by my last words, I shall not count my life thrown away, nor lost.

But yet all the things of God were kept out of my sight, and still the tempter followed me with, "But whither must you go when you die? What will become of you? Where will you be found in another world? What evidence have you for heaven and glory, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified?" Thus was I tossed for many weeks, and knew not what to do: at last this consideration fell with weight upon me, "That it was for the word and way of God that I was in this condition; wherefore I was engaged not to flinch an hair's breadth from it."

I thought also, that God might choose whether he would give me comfort now, or at the hour of death; but I might not therefore choose whether I would hold my profession or no. I was bound, but he was free; yea, it was my duty to stand to his word, whether he would ever look upon me, or save me at the last; wherefore thought I, save the point being thus, I am for going on, and venturing my eternal state with Christ, whether I have comfort here or no. If God doth not come in, thought I, "I will leap off the ladder, even blindfolded into eternity; sink or swim, come heaven, come hell. Lord Jesus if thou wilt catch me, do; if not, I will venture for thy name.

I was no sooner fixed upon this resolution, but the word dropped upon me, Doth Job serve God for nought? As if the accuser had said, "Lord, Job is no upright man; he serves thee for by-respects: hast thou not made an hedge about him?" &c. But put forth now thine hand, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.—How now, thought I, is this the sign of a renewed soul, to desire to serve God when all is taken from him? Is he a godly man that will serve God for nothing rather than give out? Blessed be God, then, I hope I have an upright heart; for I am resolved, God giving me strength, never to deny my profession, though I had nothing at all for my pains. And as I was thus considering, that scripture was set before me, (Psalm xliv. 12.) &c.

Now was my heart full of comfort, for I hoped it was sincere. I would not have been without this trial for much: I am comforted every time I think of it; and I hope I shall bless God for ever, for the teaching I have had by it. Many more of the dealings of God towards me I might relate, but these out of the spoils won in battle have I dedicated to maintain the house of God.

THE CONCLUSION.

Of all the temptations that ever I met with in my life, to question the being of God, and truth of his Gospel is the worst, and the worst to be borne. When this temptation comes, it takes away my girdle from me, and removeth the foundation from under me. Oh! I have often thought of that word, Have your loins girt about with truth: and of that, When the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?

Sometimes, when, after sin committed, I have looked for sore chastisement from the hand of God, the very next that I have had from him hath been the discovery of his grace. Sometimes, when I have been comforted, I have called myself a fool for my so sinking under trouble. And then again, when I have been cast down, I thought I was not wise to give such way to comfort. With such strength and weight have both these been upon me.

I have wondered much at this one thing, that though God doth visit my soul with never so blessed a discovery of himself, yet I have found again, that such hours have attended me afterwards that I have been in

my spirit so filled with darkness, that I could not so much as once conceive, what that God, and what that comfort was, with which I have been refreshed.

I have sometimes seen more in a line of the Bible, than I could well tell how to stand under; and yet at another time the whole Bible hath been to me as dry as a stick; or rather, my heart hath been so dead and dry unto it, that I could not conceive the least dram of refreshment though I have looked it all over.

Of all fears, they are best that are made by the blood of Christ: and of all joy, that is the sweetest that is mixed with mourning over Christ: Oh! it is a goodly thing to be on our knees, with Christ in our arms, before God. I hope I know something of these things.

I find to this day seven abominations in my heart. 1. Inclining to unbelief. 2. Suddenly to forget the love and mercy that Christ manifesteth. 3. A leaning to the works of the law. 4. Wanderings and coldness in prayer. 5. To forget to watch for that I pray for. 6. Apt to murmur because I have no more, and yet ready to abuse what I have. 7. I can do none of those things which God commands me, but my corruptions will thrust in themselves. When I would do good, evil is present with me.

These things I continually see and feel, and am afflicted and oppressed with; yet the wisdom of God doth order them for my good. 1. They make me abhor myself. 2. They keep me from trusting my heart. 3. They convince me of the insufficiency of all inherent righteousness. 4. They shew me the necessity of flying to Jesus. 5. They press me to pray unto God. 6. They shew me the need I have to watch and be sober. 7. And provoke me to pray unto God, through Christ, to help me, and carry me through this world.

A CONTINUATION OF MR. BUNYAN'S LIFE;

Beginning where he left off, and concluding with the time and manner of his Death and Burial, together with his true character, &c.

Reader, The painful and industrious author of this book has already given you a faithful and very moving relation of the beginning and middle of the days of his pilgrimage on earth; and since there yet remains somewhat worthy of notice and regard, which occurred in the last scene of his life; the which, for want of time, or for fear some over-censorious people should impute it to him as an earnest coveting of praise from men, he has not left behind him in writing; wherefore, as a true friend, and long acquaintance of Mr. Bunyan's, that his good end may be known, as his evil beginning, I have taken upon me, from my knowledge, and the best account given by other of his friends, to piece this to the thread too soon broken off, and so lengthen it out to his entering upon eternity.

He has told you at large, of his birth and education; the evil habits and corruptions of his youth; the temptations he struggled and conflicted so frequently with; the mercies, comforts, and deliverances he found; how he came to take upon him the preaching of the Gospel; the slanders, reproaches, and imprisonments that attended him, and the progress he notwitstanding made, by the assistance of God's grace, no doubt to the saving of many souls. Therefore take these things, as he himself has methodically laid them down in the words of verity; and so I pass on as to what remains.

After his being freed from his twelve years' imprisonment, and upwards, for nonconformity, wherein he had time to furnish the world with sundry good books, &c., and by his patience, to move Dr. Barlow, the then Bishop of Lincoln, and other churchmen, to pity his hard and unreasonable sufferings, so far as to stand very much his friends, in procuring his enlargement, or there perhaps he had died, by the noisesomeness and ill usage of the place; being now, I say, again at liberty, and having, through mercy, shaken off his bodily fetters, for those upon his soul were broken before, by the abounding grace that filled his heart, he went to visit those that had been a comfort to him in his tribulation, with a christian-like acknowledgment of their kindness and enlargement of charity; giving encouragement by his example, if it happened to be their hard haps to fall into affliction or trouble, then to suffer patiently for the sake of a good conscience, and for the love of God in Jesus Christ, towards their souls, and by many cordial persuasions, supported some, whose spirits began to sink low, through the fear of danger that threatened their worldly concernment, so that the people found a wonderful consolation in his discourse and admonitions.

As often as opportunity would admit, he gathered them together, though the law was then in force against meetings, in convenient places, and fed them with the sincere milk of the word, that they might grow in grace thereby. To such as were any where taken and imprisoned upon these accounts, he made it another part of his business to extend his charity, and gather relief for such of them as wanted

He took great care to visit the sick, and strengthen them against the suggestions of the tempter, which at such times are very prevalent; so that they had cause for ever to bless God, who had put it into his heart, at such a time, to rescue them from the power of the roaring lion, who sought to devour them. Nor did he spare any pains or labor in travel, though to the remote counties, where he knew, or imagined any people might stand in need of his assistance; insomuch that some of these visitations that he made, which were two or three every year, some (though in a jeering manner no doubt,) gave him the epithet of *Bishop Bunyan*, whilst others envied him for his so earnestly labouring in Christ's vineyard; yet the seed of the word he all this while sowed in the hearts of his congregation, watered with the grace of God, brought forth in abundance, in bringing in disciples to the church of Christ.

Another part of his time he spent in reconciling differences, by which he hindered many mischiefs, and saved some families from ruin; and in some fallings-out, he was uneasy until he found a means to labour a a reconciliation, and become a peace-maker, on whom a blessing is promised in holy writ; and indeed, in doing this good office he may be said to sum up his days, it being the last undertaking of his life, as will appear in the close of this paper.

When in the late reign, liberty of conscience was unexpectedly given and indulged to dissenters of all persuasions, his piercing wit penetrated the veil, and found that it was not for the dissenters' sakes they were so suddenly freed from the persecutions that had long lain heavy upon them, and set in a manner, on an equal foot with the church of England, which the papists were undermining, and about to subvert. He foresaw all the advantages that could redound to the dissenters, would have been no more than what Polyphemus, the monstrous giant of Sicily, would have allowed Ulysses, viz., That he would eat his men first, and do him the favor of being eaten last. For although Mr. Bunyan, following the examples of others, did lay hold of this liberty, as an acceptable thing in itself, knowing God as the only Lord of conscience, and that it is good at all times to do according to the dictates of a good conscience, and that the preaching the glad tidings of the Gospel is beautiful in the preacher; yet in all this he moved with caution and holy fear, earnestly praying for averting the impendent judgments, which he saw, like a black tempest, hanging over our heads for our sins, and ready to break upon us, and that the Ninevites' remedy was now highly necessary; Hereupon he gathered his congregation at Bedford, where he mostly lived, and had lived and spent the greater part of his life; and there being no convenient place to be had for the entertainment of so great a confluence of people as followed him, upon the account of his teaching, he consulted with them for the building of a meeting-house; to which they made their voluntary contributions, with all cheerfulness and alacrity; and the first time he appeared there to edify, the place was so thronged, that many were constrained to stay without, though the house was very spacious, every one striving to partake of his instructions, that were of his persuasion, and show their good will towards him, by being present at the opening of the place. And here he lived in peace and quiet of mind, contenting himself with that little God had bestowed on him, and sequestering himself from all secular employments to follow that of his call to the ministry; for as God said to Moses, he that made the lips and heart, can give eloquence and wisdom, without extraordinary acquirements in an university.

During these things, there were regulators sent into all cities and towns corporate, to newmodel the government in the magistracy, &c., by turning out some, and putting in others. Against this Mr. Bunyan expressed his zeal with some warmness, as foreseeing the bad consequence that would attend it, and labored with his congregation to prevent their being imposed on in this kind: and when a great man in those days coming to Bedford upon some such errand, sent for him, as it is supposed, to give him a place of public trust, he would by no means come at him, but sent his excuse.

When he was at leisure from writing and teaching, he often came up to London, and there went among the congregations of the nonconformists, and used his talents to the great goodliking of the hearers; and even some, to whom he had been misrepresented, upon the account of his education, were convinced of his worth and knowledge in sacred things, as perceiving him to be a man of sound judgment, delivering himself plainly and powerfully; insomuch that many who came spectators for novelty, rather than to be edified and improved, went away well satisfied with what they heard; and wondered, as the Jews did at the apostles, viz., whence this man should have these things; perhaps not considering that God more immediately assists those that make it their business industriously and cheerfully to labor in his vineyard.

Thus he spent his latter years in imitation of his great Lord and Master, the ever-blessed Jesus; he went about doing good; so that the most prying critic, or even malice herself, is defied to find, even upon the narrowest search or observation, any sully

or stain upon his reputation, with which he may be justly charged; and this we note, as a challenge to those that have had the least regard for him, or them of his persuasion, and have one way or other appeared in the front of those that oppressed him; and for the turning whose hearts, in obedience to the commission and commandment given him of God, he frequently prayed, and sometimes sought a blessing for them, even with tears; the effects of which they may, peradventure, though undeservedly, have found in their persons, friends, relations, estates; for God will hear the prayers of the faithful, and answer them, even for those that vex them, as it happened in the case of Job's praying for the three persons that had been grievous in their reproach against him, even in the day of his sorrow.

But yet let me come a little nearer to particulars, and periods of time, for the better refreshing the memories of those that knew his labor and sufferings, and for the satisfaction of all that read this book.

After he was sensibly convicted of the wicked state of his life, and converted, he was baptized into the congregation, and admitted a member thereof, viz., in the year 1655, and became speedily a very zealous professor. But upon the return of King Charles to the crown in 1660, he was, on the 12th of November, taken, as he was edifying some good people that had got together to hear the word, and confined in Bedford gaol for the space of six years, till the act of indulgence to dissenters being allowed, he obtained his freedom by the intercession of some in trust and power, that took pity of his sufferings. But within six years afterwards, he was again taken up, viz., in the year 1666, and was then confined for six years more; when the gaoler took such pity of his rigorous sufferings, that he did as the Egyptian gaoler did to Joseph, put all the care and trust in his hand. When he was taken this last time he was preaching on these words, viz., *Dost thou believe on the Son of God?* And this imprisonment continued six years; and when this was over, another short affliction, which was an imprisonment of half a year, fell to his share. During these confinements, he wrote these following books, viz: *Of Prayer by the Spirit, The Holy City's Resurrection, Grace Abounding, Pilgrim's Progress, the first part.*

In the last year of his twelve years' imprisonment, the pastor of the congregation at Bedford died, and he was chosen to that care of souls, on the 12th of December, 1671. And in this charge he often had disputes with scholars that came to oppose him, as supposing him an ignorant person; and though he argued plainly, and by scripture, without phrases and logical expressions, yet he nonplussed one who came to oppose him, in his congregations, by demanding, Whether or no we had the true copies of the original scriptures? And another, when he was preaching accused him of uncharitableness for saying, "It was very hard for most to be saved;" saying, by that he went about to exclude most of his congregation. But he confuted him, and put him to silence, with the parable of the stony ground, and other texts out of the 13th of Matthew, in our Saviour's sermon out of a ship; all his methods being to keep close to the scriptures, and what he found not warranted there, himself would not warrant nor determine, unless in such cases as were plain, wherein no doubts nor scruples did arise.

But not to make any further mention of this kind, it is well known that this person managed all his affairs with such exactness as if he had made it his study, above all other things, not to give occasion of offence, but rather suffer many inconveniences to avoid it, being never heard to reproach or revile any, what injury soever he received, but rather to rebuke those that did. And as it was in his conversation, so it is manifested in those books he has caused to be published to the world; where, like the archangel disputing with Satan about the body of Moses, as we find it in the Epistle of St. Jude, he brings no railing accusation, but leaves the rebukers, those that persecuted him, to the Lord.

In his family he kept very strict discipline, in prayer and exhortations, being in this like Joshua, as that good man expresses it, viz: Whatsoever others did, as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.—And indeed a blessing waited on his labors and endeavors; so that his wife, as the Psalmist says, was like a pleasant vine upon the wall of his house, and his children like olive-branches round his table; for so shall it be with the man that fears the Lord; and though by reason of the many losses he sustained by imprisonment and spoil, of his chargeable sickness, &c., his earthly treasure swelled not to excess, he always had sufficient to live decently and creditably; and with that he had the greatest of all treasures, which is content: for as the wise man says, that is a continual feast.

But where content dwells, even a poor cottage is a kingly palace; and this happiness he had all his life long, not so much minding this world, as knowing he was here as a pilgrim and stranger, and had no tarrying city, but looked for one not made with hands, eternal in the highest heavens. But at length, worn out with sufferings, age, and often teaching, the day of his dissolution drew near; and death, that unlocks the prison of his soul, to enlarge it for a

more glorious mansion, put a stop to his acting his part on the stage of motality.—Heaven, like earthly princes, when it threatens war, being always so kind as to call home its ambassadors before it be denounced. And even the last act or undertaking of his was a labour of love and charity: for it so falling out, that a young gen'leman, a neighbor of Mr. Bunyan's happening into the displeasure of his father, and being much troubled in his mind upon that account, as also for that he had heard his father purposed to disinherit him, or otherwise deprive him of what he had to leave, he pitched upon Mr. Bunyan as a fit man to make way for his submission, and prepare his father's mind to receive him; and he, as willing to do any good office as it could be requested, as readily undertook it; and so riding to Reading in Berkshire, he there used such pressing arguments and reasons against anger and passion, as also for love and reconciliation, that the father was mollified, and his bowels yearned towards his returning son.

But Mr. Bunyan, after he had disposed all things to the best for accommodation, returning to London, and being overtaken with excessive rains, coming to his lodging extremely wet, fell sick of a violent fever; which he bore with much constancy and patience, and expressed himself as if he desired nothing more than to be dissolved, and be with Christ, in that case esteeming death as gain, and life only a tedious delaying felicity expected; and finding his vital strength decay, having settled his mind and affairs, as well as the shortness of time and the violence of his disease, would admit, with a constant and christian patience, he resigned his soul into the hands of his most merciful Redeemer, following his pilgrimage from the city of Destruction to the New Jerusalem, his better part having been all along there, in holy contemplation, pantings and breathings after the hidden manna, and water of life, as by many holy and humble consolations, expressed in his letters to several persons in prison, and out of prison; too many to be here inserted at present. He died at the house of one Mr. Straddock, a grocer at the Star on Snowhill, in the parish of St. Sepulchre, London, on the 12th of August, 1688, and in the 60th year of his age, after ten days' sickness; and was buried in the new burying place near the Artillery Ground; where he sleeps to the morning of the resurrection, in hopes of a glorious rising to an incorruptible immortality of joy and happiness, where no more trouble and sorrow shall afflict him, but all tears be wiped away; when the just shall be incorporated as members of Christ their head, and reign with him as kings and priests for ever.

A BRIEF CHARACTER OF MR. JOHN BUNYAN.

He appeared in countenance to be of a stern and rough temper; but in his conversation mild and affable, not given to loquacity, or much discourse in company, unless some urgent occasion required it; observing never to boast of himself, or his parts, but rather seem low in his own eyes, and submit himself to the judgment of others; abhorring lying and swearing, being just in all that lay in his power to his word; not seeming to revenge injuries, loving to reconcile differences, and make friendship with all. He had a sharp quick eye, accomplished with an excellent discerning of persons, being of good judgment and quick wit. As for his person, he was tall of stature, strong boned, though not corpulent, somewhat of a ruddy face, with sparkling eyes, wearing his hair on his upper lip, after the old British fashion; his hair reddish, but in his latter days, time had sprinkled it with grey; his nose well set, but not declining or bending, and his mouth moderately large; his forehead something high, and his habit always plain and modest.—And thus have we impartially described the internal and external parts of a person whose death hath been much regretted; a person who had tried the smiles and frowns of time, not puffed up in prosperity, nor shaken in adversity, always holding the golden mean.

In him at once did three great worthies shine,
Historian, poet, and a choice divine;
Then let him rest in undisturbed dust,
Until the resurrection of the just.

P. S. In his pilgrimage God blessed him with four children, one of which, named Mary, was blind, and died some years before. His other children are Thomas, Joseph, and Sarah; and his wife Elizabeth, having lived to see him overcome his labor and sorrow, and pass from this life to receive the reward of his works, long survived him not; but in 1692 she died, to follow her faithful Pilgrim from this world to the other, whither he has gone before her, while his works remain for the edifying of the reader, and praise of the author.

VAIL.

MR. JOHN BUNYAN'S DYING SAYINGS.

Of Sin.

Sin is the great block and bar to our happiness, the procurer of all miseries to man

both here and hereafter. Take away sin, and nothing can hurt us; for death, temporal, spiritual and eternal, is the wages of it.

Sin, and man for sin, is the object of the wrath of God. How dreadful therefore must his case be who continues in sin! for who can bear or grapple with the wrath of God!

No sin against God can be little; because it is against the great God of heaven and earth; but if the sinner can find out a little God, it may be easy to find out little sins.

Sin turns all God's grace into wantonness: it is the dare of his justice, the rape of his mercy, the jeer of his patience, the slight of his power, and the contempt of his love.

Take heed of giving thyself liberty of committing one sin, for that will lead thee to another, till by an ill custom it become natural.

To begin a sin is to lay a foundation for a continuance: this continuance is the mother of custom, and impudence at least the issue.

The death of Christ giveth us the best discovery of ourselves, in what condition we were in that nothing could help us but that; and the most clear discovery of the dreadful nature of our sins: for if sin be so dreadful a thing as to wring the heart of the Son of God, how shall a poor wretched sinner be able to bear it.

Of Affliction.

Nothing can render affliction so insupportable as the load of sin. Would you therefore be fitted for afflictions? Be sure to get the burden of your sins laid aside, and then what affliction soever you may meet with will be very easy to you.

If thou canst hear and bear the rod of affliction which God shall lay upon thee, remember this lesson, Thou art beaten that thou mayest be better.

The Lord useth his flail of tribulation, to separate the chaff from the wheat.

The school of the cross is the school of light; it discovers the world's vanity, baseness, and wickedness, and lets us see more of God's mind. Out of dark affliction comes a spiritual light.

In times of affliction we commonly meet with the sweetest experiences of the love of God.

Did we heartily renounce the pleasures of this world, we should be very little troubled for our afflictions: that which renders an afflicted state so insupportable to many, is because they are too much addicted to the pleasures of this life, and so cannot endure that which makes a separation between them.

Of Repentance and Coming to Christ.

The end of affliction is the discovery of sin, and of that to bring us to a Saviour. Let us therefore, with the prodigal, return unto him, and we shall find ease and rest.

A repenting penitent, though formerly as bad as the worst of men, may by grace become as good as the best.

To be truly sensible of sin, is to sorrow for displeasing of God, to be afflicted that he is displeased by us, more than that he is displeased with us.

Your intentions to repentance, and the neglect of that soul-saving duty, will rise up in judgment against you.

Repentance carries with it a divine rhetoric, and persuades Christ to forgive multitudes of sins committed against him.

Say not with thyself, to-morrow I will repent; for it is thy duty to do it daily.

The gospel of grace and salvation is above all doctrines the most dangerous, if it be received in word only by graceless men; if it be not attended with a sensible need of a Saviour, and bring them to him. For such men as have only the notion of it are of all men most miserable; for by reason of their knowing more than heathens, this shall only be their final portion, that they shall have greater stripes.

Of Prayer.

Before you enter into prayer, ask thy soul these questions: 1. To what end, O my soul, art thou retired into this place? Art thou not come to discourse the Lord in prayer? Is he present, will he hear thee? Is he merciful, will he help thee? Is thy business slight, is it not concerning the welfare of thy soul? What words wilt thou use to move him to compassion?

To make thy preparation complete, consider that thou art but dust and ashes, and he the great God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, *that clothes himself with light as with a garment;* that thou art a vile sinner, he a holy God; that thou art but a poor crawling worm, he the omnipotent Creator.

In all your prayers forget not to thank the Lord for his mercies.

When thou prayest, rather let thy heart be without words, than thy words without a heart.

Prayer will make a man cease from sin, or sin will entice a man to cease from prayer.

The spirit of prayer is more precious than treasures of gold and silver.

Pray often; for prayer is a shield to the soul, a sacrifice to God, and a scourge for Satan.

Of the Lord's day, Sermons, and Week-days.

Have a special care to sanctify the Lord's

day; for as thou keepest it, so will it be with thee all the week long.

Make the Lord's day the market for thy soul: let the whole day be spent in prayer, repetitions, or meditations; lay aside the affairs of the other parts of the week: let the sermon thou hast heard be converted into prayer. Shall God allow thee six days, and wilt not thou afford him one?

In the church be careful to serve God; for thou art in his eyes, and not in man's.

Thou mayest hear sermons often, and do well in practising what thou hearest; but thou must not expect to be told thee in a pulpit all that thou oughtest to do, but be studious in searching the scriptures, and reading good books. What thou hearest may be forgotten; but what thou readest may be better retained.

Forsake not the public worship of God, lest God forsake thee, not only in public but in private.

In the week-days when thou risest in the morning, consider, 1. Thou must die. 2. Thou mayest die that minute. 3. What will become of thy soul. Pray often. At night consider, 1. What sins thou hast committed. 2. How often thou hast prayed. 3. What hath thy mind been bent upon. 4. What hath been thy dealing. 5. What thy conversation. 6. If thou callest to mind the errors of the day, sleep not without a confession to God, and a hope of pardon. Thus, every morning and evening, make up thy accounts with Almighty God, and thy reckoning will be the less at last.

Of the Love of the World.

Nothing more hinders a soul from coming to Christ than a vain love of the world; and till a soul is freed from it, it can never have a true love for God.

What are the honors and riches of this world, when compared to the glories of a crown of life?

Love not the world; for it is a moth in a christian's life.

To despise the world, is the way to enjoy heaven; and blessed are they who delight to converse with God by prayer.

What folly can be greater than to labor for the meat that perisheth, and neglect the food of eternal life?

God or the world must be neglected at parting time; for then is the time of trial.

To seek yourself in this world is to be lost; and to be humble is to be exalted.

The epicure that delighteth in the dainties of this world, little thinketh that those very creatures will one day witness against him.

Of Suffering.

It is not every suffering that makes a martyr, but suffering for the word of God after a right manner; that is, not only for righteousness, but for righteousness' sake; not only for truth, but out of love to truth; not only for God's word, but according to it; to wit, in that holy, humble, meek manner, as the word of God requireth.

It is a rare thing to suffer aright, and to have thy spirit in suffering bent only against God's enemy, sin: sin in doctrine, sin in worship, sin in life, and sin in conversation.

The devil, nor men of the world, can kill thy righteousness, or love to it; but by thy own hand; or separate that and thee asunder without thy own act. Nor will he that doth indeed suffer for the sake of it, or out of love he bears thereto, be tempted to exchange it for the good will of all the world.

I have often thought, that the best of christians are found in the worst of times; and I have thought again, that one reason why we are no better, is because God purges us no more. Noah and Lot, who so holy as they in the time of their afflictions? And yet who so idle as they in the time of their prosperity?

Of Death and Judgment.

As the devil labors by all means to keep out other things that are good, so to keep out of the heart as much as in him lies, the thoughts of passing from this life into another world; for he knows, if he can but keep them from the serious thoughts of death, he shall the more easily keep them in their sins.

Nothing will make us more earnest in working out the work of our salvation, than a frequent meditation of mortality; nothing hath greater influence for the taking off our hearts from vanities, and for the begetting in us desires after holiness.

O sinner, what a condition wilt thou fall into when thou departest this world, if thou depart unconverted! Thou hadst better have been smothered the first hour thou wast born; thou hadst better have been plucked one limb from another; thou hadst better have been made a dog, a toad, a serpent, than to die unconverted: and this thou wilt find true if thou repent not.

A man would be counted a fool to slight a judge before whom he is to have a trial of his whole estate. The trial we have before God is of otherwise importance; it concerns our eternal happiness or misery; and yet dare we affront him?

The only way for us to escape that terrible judgment, is to be often passing a sentence of condemnation upon ourselves here.

When the sound of the trumpet shall be heard, which shall summon the dead to appear before the tribunal of God, the righteous shall hasten out of their graves, with

joy, to meet their Redeemer in the clouds; others shall call to the hills and mountains to fall upon them, to cover them from the sight of their Judge. Let us therefore in time be posing ourselves which of the two we shall be.

Of the Joys of Heaven.

There is no good in this life but what is mingled with some evil. Honors perplex, riches disquiet, and pleasures ruin health. But in heaven we shall find blessings in their purity, without any ingredient to embitter, with every thing to sweeten them.

O! who is able to conceive the inexpressible, inconceivable joys that are there? None but they who have tasted of them. Lord, help us to put such a value upon them here, that in order to prepare ourselves for them, we may be willing to forego the loss of all those deluding pleasures here.

How will the heavens echo of joy, when the bride, the Lamb's wife, shall come to dwell with her husband for ever!

Christ is the desire of nations, the joy of angels, the delight of the Father. What solace then must that soul be filled with, that hath the possession of him to all eternity!

O! what acclamations of joy will there be, when all the children of God shall meet together, without fear of being disturbed by the anti-christian and Cainish brood!

Is there not a time coming when the godly may ask the wicked, What comfort in their greatness? And what fruit in all their labor?

If you would be better satisfied what the beatifical vision means, my request is, that you would live holily, and go and see.

Of the Torments of Hell.

Heaven and salvation is not surely more promised to the godly, than hell and damnation is threatened to, and shall be executed on, the wicked.

When once a man is damned, he may bid adieu to all pleasures.

Oh! who knows the power of God's wrath? None but damned ones.

Sinners' company are the devil and his angels, tormented in everlasting fire with a curse.

Hell would be a kind of paradise, if it were no worse than the worst of this world.

As different as grief is from joy, as torment from rest, as terror from peace, so different is the state of sinners from that of saints in the world to come.

END.

THE

PRACTICAL USES

OF

CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

BY ANDREW FULLER.

That Christian baptism is properly administered only by immersion, and to those who make a credible profession of faith in Christ, it is no part of our present design to prove. Addressing *you*, we shall take each of these particulars for granted. The only subject to which we now request your attention is the *influence* of this ordinance, where it produces its proper effects, in promoting piety in individuals, and purity in the church.

There is no part of true religion that is merely speculative: the whole is designed and adapted to sanctify the soul. We may presume, therefore, that if baptism be an ordinance of God, and of perpetual obligation in the church, it is of importance to Christian practice.

But it is not on presumptive evidence that we wish to rest the improvement of this institution, any more than the institution itself; neither shall we go about to connect with it acknowledged duties by imaginary alliances; but shall confine ourselves to

those uses of the ordinance which are actually made, or suggested in the New Testament. We could address many things to parents, and things of importance too, on bringing up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord: we could also urge it upon the children of believers that they were committed to God from their earliest infancy; but as we find nothing of this kind in the Scriptures *connected with baptism*, however important these things would be in their place, they would be altogether irrelevant while treating of this ordinance.

Baptism is a divine institution, pertaining to the kingdom of the Messiah, or the gospel dispensation. John received it *from heaven*, and administered it to the Jews, who, on his proclaiming that *the kingdom of heaven was at hand*, confessed their sins. Jesus gave sanction to it by his example; and after his resurrection, when all power in heaven and earth was committed to him, he confirmed and extended it to believers of all nations. Whatever circumstantial differences there might be, therefore, between the baptism of John and that of Christ, they were substantially the same. There were things in former ages which bore a resemblance to it; as the salvation of Noah and his family in the ark, the passage of the Israelites through the sea, divers washings or bathings prescribed by the Mosaic ritual, &c.; but the thing itself existed not, till it was revealed to the immediate forerunner of Christ.

The principal design of it appears to be, *A solemn and practical profession of the Christian religion.* Such was the baptism of John, who "said unto the people that they should believe on him who should come after him: that is, on Christ Jesus." And such was that in the times of the apostles. Paul addressing himself to the churches in Galatia, who, after having professed to believe in Christ, cleaved to the Mosaic law as a medium of justification, thus speaks: "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith: but, after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have PUT ON CHRIST." The allusion is to the putting on of apparel, as when one enters into the service of a prince puts on his distinguishing attire: and the design of the sacred writer is to remind those of them who had before professed the Jewish religion, that by a solemn act of their own they had, as it were, put off Moses, and put on Christ. There is a putting on of Christ which is internal, and consists in relinquishing the former lusts, and being of the mind of Christ; but that which is here referred to appears to be an *open profession* of his name, to the renouncing of every thing that stood in competition with him. It was therefore true of *as many as had been baptized*, whether they abode in the truth or not. And even their being "the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ" seems to express what they were in profession, rather than what they were in fact. They had by their baptism disowned all dependence on the privileges of birth, and the adoption which pertained to them as the children of Abraham; and declared their acquiescence in that power, or privilege, to become the sons of God, which the gospel imparts to them that believe. The mention of this was perfectly in point, as it greatly heightened the evil of their defection. The amount is, *That as many as were baptized in the primitive ages were voluntary agents, and submitted to this ordinance for the purpose of making a solemn and practical profession of the Christian faith.* It was their oath of allegiance to the King of Zion; that by which they avowed the Lord to be their God. Hence a rejection of it involved *a rejection of the counsel of God.* The sin of the Pharisees and lawyers consisted, not in their refusing to submit to baptism *as unbelievers;* but in not embracing the Messiah, and so putting on the badge of his profession. Their rejection of this sign was justly construed as a rejection of the thing signified; as, when a rebel refuses to take the oath of allegiance, it is construed as a refusal of submission and subjection to his rightful prince.

Such, brethren, is the profession we have made. We have not only declared in words our repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ; but have said the same things by our baptism. We have solemnly surrendered ourselves up to Christ, taking him to be our prophet, priest, and king; engaging to receive his doctrine, to rely on his atonement, and to obey his laws. The vows of God are upon us. We have even sworn to keep his righteous judgments; and, without violating the oath of God, we cannot go back. If it be a sin not to confess the Lord Jesus, through fear or shame, it is a still greater sin, after we have confessed him, to turn from the holy commandment.

The religion of Jesus consists partly of *truths* to be believed, and partly of *precepts* to be obeyed; and the ordinance of baptism furnishes motives for a faithful adherence to both.

We have been baptized "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit;" and have thus practically avowed our belief in them. It was at Jordan that the Father bore witness to his well-beloved Son, and that the Holy Spirit descend-

ed upon him: hither, therefore, in the early ages, men were directed to repair, that they might learn the doctrine of the trinity. If we relinquish this doctrine, we virtually relinquish our baptism. Of this there need not be a more convincing proof than the inclination which has been discovered by those who have renounced the doctrine to disuse the form of baptizing in the name of the Sacred Three.

We have also professed by our baptism to embrace that great salvation which is accomplished by the united influence of the Sacred Three. We have in effect declared our acquiescence in the freeness of the Father's grace, in the all-sufficient atonement of the Son, and in the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit: for these are the principal things by which, in the New Testament account of the economy of grace, each is distinguished. Nor can we renounce them, without virtually renouncing our baptism.

The immersion of the body in *water*, which is a purifying element, contains a profession of our faith in Christ, through the shedding of whose blood we are cleansed from all sin. Hence, baptism in the name of Christ is said to be *for the remission of sins*. Not that there is any such virtue in the element, whatever be the quantity; nor in the ceremony, though of divine appointment: but it contains a *sign* of the way in which we must be saved. Sin is washed away in baptism in the same sense as Christ's flesh is eaten, and his blood drank, in the Lord's supper: the sign, when rightly used, leads to the thing signified. Remission of sins is ascribed by Peter not properly to baptism, but to the *name* in which the parties were to be baptized. Thus also Saul was directed to *wash away his sins, calling on the name of the Lord*. Nearly akin to this is the idea conveyed to us in the First Epistle of Peter: "The long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, wherein few, that is eight souls, were *saved by water*. The like figure whereunto baptism doth *now save us* (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." The salvation of Noah and his family by the ark was *a figure* of our salvation by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The ark for a time was surrounded, as it were, with waters from above, and from beneath: but it survived its trial, and those who were in it were at length brought safe to land. Christ, also, for a time sustained the deluge of wrath due to our sins; but survived the trial, rising triumphantly from the dead, and thereby saved us from everlasting death. Of this great transaction baptism is *a like figure*. It is another sign of the same thing. The resemblance of baptism by immersion to the death and resurrection of Christ, and the suitableness of the one to signify our faith in the other, are manifest. It is thus that baptism does *now save us*: not as putting away the filth of the flesh (for all the virtue contained in the ordinance itself is "the answer of a good conscience toward God,") but as affording a sign of our salvation by the victorious resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And, as we are taught by our baptism to adhere to the doctrine of God our Saviour, so we are furnished with motives to adorn it by a *holy conversation*. Thus it is introduced in the epistles to the Romans and Colossians as a sign of our being *dead* and and *buried* to the principles and pursuits of the present world; and, by faith in Christ, *raised* as into a new world. The *death* of Christ is emphatically mentioned as that into which we are baptized—"Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his *death?* Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism *into death;* that like as Christ died, and was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Christ's dying *for* sin afforded a most powerful motive for our dying *to* it; and the immersion of the body in baptism, being *in the likeness* of the former, furnishes an additional motive to the latter.

The leading idea suggested by a death and burial seems to be that of *separation from the world*. There is no greater line of separation than that which is drawn between the dead and the living. "The dead know not anything; and have no portion in all that is done under the sun." Such is the line which is drawn by the faith of the operation of God between the world renewed and the world depraved, of which baptism is the appointed sign. If, after this, we are found among evil doers, we may well be considered and shunned as a kind of apparitions, which have no proper concern in the affairs of mortals.

The apostle applied this reasoning against a conformity to abrogated ceremonies. "If ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances." The same reasoning is applicable to other things, If we be dead with Christ, why, as though living, are we subject to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, which are of the world? Why are any of us conformed to this world; and not rather transformed by the renewing of our minds? If we be dead, and our life be hid with Christ in God, why are not our affections set on things above, and not on things on the earth? We cannot but express our

concern that persons professing godliness should be carried away by the course of this world, as many are; meanly imitating the ungodly, whose conduct they ought rather to reprove. Such imitations, so far as it operates, contains a virtual renunciation of our baptism. The ideas of baptism and a separation from the world, whether connected by us or not, are strongly associated in the minds of men in general. After this, we cannot unite with them in evil, without drawing upon ourselves their most pointed censures. They may labor to seduce us for the sake of comforting themselves; and while accomplishing their purpose may suppress their private thoughts of us, and even compliment us for our liberality; but, if we comply, their pretended esteem will be turned into reproach. Nor ought we to consider this as an evil; but rather as a mercy. God has hereby set a hedge about us, which tends more than a little to preserve us from temptation. If any think otherwise, and feel uneasy that they cannot act like other men, without drawing upon themselves the censures of mankind, it is a dark sign that their hearts are not right in the sight of God.

Nor is this ordinance adapted merely to separate between believers and unbelievers *individually* considered: its design is also to draw a line of distinction between *the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of Satan.* Whatever may be said of baptism as it is now generally understood and practised, and of the personal religion of those who practise it, it was *originally* appointed to be the boundary of visible Christianity.—This is a principle which, if properly acted upon, would go far to prevent the confounding of the church and the world; and which, consequently, tends more than any thing of the kind to counteract ecclesiastical degeneracy and corruption. Had the Christian church in all ages admitted none to baptism, from whomsoever descended, but those who professed to repent and believe the gospel, it is scarcely conceivable that any others would have been admitted to the Lord's supper: and, if so, a stream of corruption which has actually deluged it with anti-christianism would have been diverted at the springhead. The church might, indeed, have been corrupted from other causes, but these would have been merely *accidental.* Hypocrites and formalists might have imposed themselves upon it, as they did in some degree in the apostolic age; but they would have been intruders. Whatever of this kind might have existed, believers could not have been *constitutionally* yoked together with unbelievers. The carnal descendants of godly people could not have claimed a place in Christ's visible kingdom. The church could not have become national, embracing as its children all who are born in a Christianized country, without any profession of personal religion. Princes and nobles, if worthy, would have been received into its communion as brethren; but not as rulers or patrons: and, if unworthy, refused; even though an exposure to persecution had been the consequence. But if persons be admitted to baptism without any profession of personal religion, or upon the profession of others on their behalf, their admission to the Lord's supper will in most cases follow as a matter of course. Indeed it *ought* to follow: for, though among evangelical dissenters these things are separated, yet from the beginning it was not so. Neither Scripture nor the practice of the ancient churches affords a single example of a baptized person, unless his conduct was grossly immoral, being ineligible to communion. And, if all who are now baptized be admitted to the supper, the line of separation will be broken; the church will be no longer *a garden enclosed*, but an open wilderness, where every beast of prey can range at pleasure. Thus, indeed, it was foretold it should be. The writer of the Apocalypse, describing the corruptions which should prevail in the *visible church* during the twelve hundred and sixty years' reign of Antichrist, represents it under the form of the *outer court* of the temple being *left out* of the measurement as profane, and *given to the Gentiles to be trodden under foot*, in like manner as the holy place and holy city had been trodden down by the heathen, in the time of Antiochus.

As the principle of believers' baptism, properly acted upon, would prevent the admission of all unconverted characters, except hypocrites and self-deceivers, so it would have its influence in repelling *them.* The habits of some hypocritical characters, it is true, would render it an easy thing to overleap this boundary; but it is equally true that to others it would be an effectual bar. There are not a few in the religious world who would like well to be members of a Christian church, especially where the pastor is a man of respectability, provided they could be admitted without drawing upon themselves the laugh of the irreligious. There is reason to believe that many persons of genteel connections, who wish to be thought religious, and whose consciences approve of believers' baptism, are withheld by this kind of shame from offering themselves to our churches. An ordinance which thus operates possesses a mark of its pertaining to that kingdom which is *not of this world*, and into which it is hard for a rich man to enter.

As the leading idea suggested by a death and burial is that of *separation* from the

world, so the principal thing denoted by a resurrection is an entrance into a *new* state of being. Such is that *newness of life* of which the emersion of the body from the waters of baptism is a sign, and to which it furnishes an important motive. The religion of Jesus does not consist in mere negatives. It is not enough that we be dead to the world: we must be alive to God. With real Christians old things are passed away, and all things are become new.—Unless our baptism, therefore, be merely a sign, or any unmeaning ceremony, our hopes, fears, sorrows, joys, companions, principles, and pursuits, are opposite to those of this world. Even a partial return to it is inconsistent with our baptismal vows.—If those who profess to be dead to the world cannot walk in the course of it without being considered and shunned as a kind of apparitions, those who are alive from the dead cannot return without resembling a living character who should take up his abode in a sepulchre.

A few general reflections will conclude this epistle.

The baptism of a number of serious Christians is an interesting and impressive spectacle! Often on such solemn occasions have we witnessed the falling tear; not only from the parties baptized, and others immediately connected with them, but from indifferent spectators. We could appeal to the consciences of many serious Christians, whether they did not receive their first convictions of the reality of religion at such opportunities. We could appeal to all of you who have been in the habit of attending the administration of this ordinance, whether it has not frequently furnished you with the most solemn and tender reflections.—Has not the sight of a number of young Christians, offering themselves willingly to the Lord, touched the secret springs of holy sensibility? Yes; you have been reminded by it of your own solemn engagements, and led to inquire in what manner they have been fulfilled. You have remembered the days of your espousals, when you first went after your Saviour as in the wilderness, and have been sweetly impelled to renew the solemn surrender. Nor have your reflections been confined to yourselves; you have considered these new accessions to the church of God as supplying the place of others that were taken away, and as fulfilling the promise, "Instead of thy fathers, shall be thy children." When a number of dear friends and useful characters, have, one after another, been removed by death, you have been ready to ask, Who shall fill up their place; and by whom shall Jacob arise? But when others of promising gifts and graces have come forward, and yielded up themselves to the Lord in baptism, they have seemed in a manner to be "baptized for the dead." Thus, when the ranks of an army in a besieged city are thinned by repeated engagements, and the hearts of survivors are ready to faint, a reinforcement arrives: a body of new companions throw themselves in to its relief, and inspire them with new vigor.

Further: If the foregoing remarks be just, the importance of believers' baptism must appear in a very different light from that in which some have represented it. If the ordinary acknowledgments of many who live in the neglect of this ordinance, and disapprove of the zeal of others who submit to it, may be considered as expressive of their principles, their conduct is not owing to a solid conviction, arising from impartial inquiry accompanied with prayer, that it is unscriptural, or that they have already been baptized according to the institution of Christ; but to a notion that it is of little or no account. If it be of little or no account to bind ourselves to the Lord in the way of his own prescribing—to confess his name before men—to avow our being dead to the world, and alive to him—to preserve the church from being constitutionally corrupted, and yoked together with unbelievers—to obey his commandments who saith, "Repent, and be baptized *every one of you;*" and to follow his example who yielded obedience to this institute, saying, "Thus it *becometh us* to fulfil all righteousness"—then may this excuse be admitted. But, if these things be important, then is believers' baptism important; and all attempts to depreciate it are offensive in the sight of Him who is the Lord and lawgiver of Zion.

Finally, brethren, it becomes us to beware lest that which is good in itself should, through the corruption of our nature, become an occasion of evil. There is, perhaps, no temptation more common among religious people than to think too highly of themselves on account of their advantages. Where such a spirit is cherished, baptism may become an idol, and the table of the Lord itself a snare. It is more than possible that some may so value themselves on account of their baptism as to make it a substitute for a life of holiness and universal righteousness. It appears that some among the Corinthians approached too near, at least to this spirit. They had been baptized . . they had eaten and drank at the table of the Lord . . yet they trifled with idolatry, and worldly lusts. "I would not that ye should be ignorant," said Paul, "how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea; and did eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink (for they drank of that spiritual rock that

followed them, and that rock was Christ.) But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples."—"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall!" As if he had said,—Are you members of a community which has the promised presence of Christ? Our fathers also were "under the cloud." Has God interposed in your favor? They "passed through the sea," as on dry land. Have you been baptized? So were they. They "descended" in a body into the sea; were "buried," as it were, by the cloud above them and the waters on each hand of them; and afterwards "ascended" on the other side. Have you been admitted to the holy supper? They also ate of that food, and drank of that stream, the spiritual intent of which was much the same. Yet all this afforded them no security, when they provoked the divine jealousy. Notwithstanding these privileges they fell, and were destroyed of the destroyer. These things are recorded for *our* admonition.—Of what account then will our baptism be to us, if, instead of being dead to the world and alive to God, we be the reverse? Will baptism save us? No: it will bear witness against us.

And though we may not fall into so fatal an error as to substitute baptism in the place of holiness, righteousness, and godliness; yet if we cherish a fond conceit of ourselves, magnifying our advantages to the neglect of a spirit of humble watchfulness, our baptism, instead of aiding us, will become a snare. We do not always act up to our advantages. It is very possible that Christians who are behind us, in this particular, may notwithstanding be before us in their general character. It were vain and foolish to imagine that our possessing the truth in one instance will secure us from error in every other; or that our fulfilling this command of Christ, however important, will insure a course of universal obedience.

Let us never forget that however adapted this or that ordinance, form, or mode of church government, may be to promote our spiritual interests, yet if we rest in the means they will deceive us; or rather we shall deceive ourselves. It is the presence of Christ only that can keep us alive, either as individuals or as churches. While, therefore, we recommend the means which he has prescribed, we devoutly add, with the apostle, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all!" Amen.

END.

PRINCETON REC. APR 18[illegible] THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

THE BACKSLIDER:

OR AN

INQUIRY INTO THE NATURE, SYMPTOMS, AND EFFECTS OF RELIGIOUS DECLENSION;

WITH THE

MEANS OF RECOVERY.*

BY ANDREW FULLER.

"I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding: and lo! it was all grown over with thorns; nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Then I saw, and considered it well: I looked upon it and received instruction."—*Solomon.*

Whether the present age be worse than others which have preceded it, I shall not determine; but this is manifest that it abounds not only in infidelity and profligacy, but with great numbers of loose characters among professing Christians. It is true, there are some eminently zealous and spiritual, perhaps as much so as at almost any former period: the disinterested concern which has appeared for the diffusion of evangelical religion is doubtless a hopeful feature of our times; yet it is no less evident that others are in a sad degree conformed to this world, instead of being transformed by the renewing of their minds. Even of those who retain a decency of character, many are sunk into a Laodicean lukewarmness. Professors are continually falling away from Christ; either totally, so as to walk no more with him; or partially, so as greatly to dishonor his name. Alas, how many characters of this description are to be found in our congregations! If we only review the progress of things for twenty or thirty years past, we shall perceive many who once bid fair for the kingdom of heaven now fallen a prey to the temptations of the world. Like the blossoms in the spring, they for a time excited our hopes; but a blight has succeeded: the blossom "has gone up as the dust," and the "root" in many cases appears to be "rottenness."

It is one important branch of the work of a faithful pastor to strengthen the diseased, to heal the sick, to bind up the broken, to bring again that which is driven away, and to seek that which is lost.—Ezek. xxxiv. 4. If these pages should fall into the hands of but a few of the above description, and contribute in any degree to their recovery from the snare of the devil, the writer will be amply rewarded. It is a pleasure to recover any sinner from the error of his way; but much more those of whom we once thought favorably. The place which they formerly occupied in our esteem, our hopes, and our social exercises, now seems to be a kind of chasm, which can be filled up only by the return of the party. If a child depart from his father's house, and plunge into profligacy and ruin, the father may have other children, and may love them; but none of them can heal his wound, nor can any thing satisfy him, but the return of "him that was lost."

In pursuit of this desirable object, I shall describe the nature and different species of backsliding from God—notice the symptoms of it—trace its injurious and dangerous

* This treatise was occasioned by the writer's observing several persons, of whom he had formerly entertained a favorable opinion, and with whom he had walked in Christian fellowship, having fallen, either from the doctrine or practice of pure religion. A view of their unhappy condition made a deep impression upon his mind. If he has been enabled to describe the case of a backslider to any good purpose, it has been chiefly owing to this circumstance.—He hopes that, though it was written with a special eye to a few, it may yet be useful to many.

effects—and point out the means of recovery.

ON THE GENERAL NATURE AND DIFFERENT SPECIES OF BACKSLIDING.

All backsliding from God originates in a departure of heart from him: herein consists the essence and the evil of it. "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: know, therefore, and see, that it is an evil thing and bitter, that *thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God*, and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord of hosts." But the degree of this sin, and the modes in which it operates, are various.

The backsliding of some is *total*. After having made a profession of the true religion, they apostatize from it. I am aware it is common to consider a backslider as being a good man, though in a bad state of mind: but the Scriptures do not confine the term to this application. Those who are addressed in the passage just quoted had not the fear of God in them, which can never be said of a good man. Backsliding, it is true, always suppose a *profession* of the true religion; but it does not necessarily suppose the existence of the thing professed. There is a "*perpetual* backsliding," and a "drawing back *unto perdition*."—Jer. viii. 5; Heb. x. 39. Such characters were Saul, and Ahitophel, and Judas. Many persons have in a great degree declined the practice of religion who yet comfort themselves with an idea that they shall be brought to repentance before they die; but this is presumptuously tempting God. Whosoever plunges into this gulf, or continues easy in it, under an idea of being recovered by repentance, may find himself mistaken. Both Peter and Judas went in; but only one of them came out! There is reason to fear that thousands of professors are now lifting up their eyes in torment, who in this world reckoned themselves good men, who considered their sins as pardonable errors, and laid their accounts with being brought to repentance; but, ere they were aware, the bridegroom came, and they were not ready to meet him!

The nature and deadly tendency of sin is the same in itself, whether in a wicked or in a righteous man: there is an important difference, however, between the backsliding of the one and that of the other.—That of the hypocrite arises from his "having no root in himself;" therefore it is that in the time of temptation he falleth away: but that of the sincere Christian respects the culture of the branch, and is owing to unwatchfulness, or remissness in duty. The former, in turning back, returns to a course which his heart always preferred: the latter, though in what he does he is not absolutely involuntary, for then it were innocent; yet it is not with a full or perfect consent of his will. He does not sin *wilfully:* that which he does *he allows not:* it is against the *habitual disposition* of his soul: he is not himself, as we should say, while so acting.* Finally: The one, were it not for the remorse of conscience which may continue to haunt him and disturb his peace, would be in his element in having made a full ridance of religion; but this is not the case with the other. A life of deviation and distance from God is not his element, nor can he enjoy himself in it. This difference is remarkably exemplified in the cases of Saul and David. The religion of the former never appears to have fitted him: he was continually acting awkwardly with it, and presently threw it aside. If, in addition to this, he could have forgotten it, and lived without being terrified by the apprehension of consequences, he would doubtless have been much the happier for having cast it off. But, when the latter had sinned, he was not like the raven which went forth of the ark, and came no more; but like the dove which could find no rest for the sole of her foot till she returned. The thirty-second and thirty-eighth psalms express the wretchedness of his mind till he confessed his sin and obtained mercy.

But, whatever difference there be between a partial and a total departure from God, it will be difficult, if not impossible, for the party himself, at the time, to perceive it. So long as any man continues in a backsliding state, the reality of his religion must remain uncertain. He may not be without hope, nor ought he to be without fear.—The Scriptures know nothing of that kind of confidence which renders men easy in their sins. Paul stood in *doubt* of the Galatians, and they ought to have stood in doubt of themselves. The species of backsliding are various: some respect doctrine, others practice; but all are the operations of a heart departing from the living God.

In some, a backsliding spirit first appears by a relinquishment of evangelical doctrine. Where truth is treated merely as a matter of speculation, or as an opinion of no great moment, it is not held fast; and, where this

* It is usual to denominate a character by his habitual, or ruling disposition, and not by occasional deviations from it. Thus when we hear of him who was famed for meekness speaking unadvisedly with his lips, we say, This was not Moses: or of him who was distinguished by his courageous avowal of his Lord denying with oaths that he knew him, we say, This was not Peter. Both these great characters, in these instances, acted beside themselves: It was not they, as it were, but sin that dwelt in them. See Heb. x. 26. Rom. vii. 15—25.

is the case, it is easily surrendered. If a plausible book in favor of deism, or any of those vain systems which nearly approach it, fall in their way, they are ready to yield; and by reading the performance a second time, or conversing with a person who favors it, they make shipwreck of their faith, and are driven on the rocks of infidelity. Such was the process in the days of the apostles: those who "received not the love of the truth," were given up to "believe a lie."—2. Thes. ii. 10, 11.

If these departures from evangelical principles were closely examined, it would be found that they were preceded by a neglect of private prayer, watchfulness, self-diffidence, and walking humbly with God; and every one may perceive that they are followed with similar effects. It has been acknowledged, by some who have embraced the Socinian system, that since they entertained those views they had lost even the gift of prayer. Perhaps they might draw up and read *an address to the Deity;* but they could not pray. Where the principles of the gospel are abandoned, the spirit of prayer, and of all close walking with God, will go with it. The confession of Peter that Jesus "was the Christ, the Son of God," is thought to be that which our Lord denominates the *rock* on which he would build his church. We are sure that the belief of this article of faith was required as a kind of test of Christianity: and who can look into the Christian world with attention, and not perceive that it still continues a sort of key-stone to the building? If this give way, the fabric falls. Backslidings of this nature are infinitely dangerous. He that declines in holy practice has to labor against the remonstrances of conscience: but he that brings himself to think lightly of sin, and meanly of the Saviour (which is what every false system of religion teaches) has gone far towards silencing the accusations of this unpleasant monitor. He is upon good terms with himself. The disorder of his soul is deep; but it is of a flattering nature. The declension of serious religion in him is no less apparent to *others* than that of the constitution by a consuming hectic: yet as is common in such cases, the party himself thinks he shall do well. In short, "the light which is in him is darkness;" and this is the greatest of all darkness!

In others, a departure of heart from God is followed by *falling into some gross immorality.*—There are instances in which a sudden misconduct of this sort has been overruled for the awakening of the mind from its stupor, and divesting it of its self-confidence. It was manifestly thus with the apostle Peter. The stumbling of such persons is not that they should fall; but rather that they should stand with greater care and firmness. But the greatest danger arises from those cases where some lust of the flesh has gradually obtained the ascendancy over the heart; so that when the subject of it falls, in the eyes of the world, it is only appearing to be what he has long been in secret; and the first wrong step that he makes, instead of alarming him, and occasioning his going aside to weep bitterly, is only the prelude to a succession of others. This not the fall of one who is "overtaken in a fault;" but of one who is entangled in the net of his own corruptions. One sin prepares the way for another. Like the insect infolded in the spider's web, he loses all power of resistance, and falls a prey to the destroyer. Some have fallen sacrifices to intemperance, not by being overtaken in a single act of intoxication, but by contracting a habit of hard drinking. First, it was indulged in private, perhaps under some outward trouble, instead of carrying it to a throne of grace. In a little time its demands increased. At length it could no longer be kept a secret; reason was enslaved to sense, and the Christian professor sunk below the man! Others have indulged in impurity. Intimacies which may have arisen from nothing worse than a few improper familiarities—yea, which in some instances have originated in religion itself, have been known, through the corrupt propensities of the human heart, which turns every thing it touches into poison, to produce the most fatal effects. Passions of this sort once kindled will soon possess all the soul. They leave no room for any thing that should resist them: not only consuming every spiritual desire and holy thought, but banishing from the mind even the sober dictates of reason, reducing the most exalted characters to the rank of *fools in Israel.* Near these rocks are seen many a floating wreck; and among these quicksands numbers who once bade fair for the haven of everlasting life.

Another way in which a departure from God very often operates is by the love of the world.—It is not uncommon for persons who once appeared to be zealous, affectionate, and devoted to God, when they come to be settled in life, and to enter into its necessary avocations, to lose all heart for religion, and to take no delight in any thing but saving money. This, it is true, is not generally considered by the world as disreputable: on the contrary, provided we be fair in our dealings, it is reckoned a mark of wisdom. "Men will praise thee when thou doest well to thyself." Such a one, say they, is a discreet man, and one that knows how to secure the *main chance.* Yet the Scriptures are very decisive against such characters. This is the sin which they denominate "the lust of the eye." The cares, and riches, and pleasures of this life,

are described as *choking the word*, and rendering it unfruitful. It is worthy of special notice that, when our Lord had warned his followers "to take heed and beware of covetousness," the example which he gives of this sin is not of one that was a plunderer of others men's property, and unfair dealer, or an oppressor of the poor; but of a "certain rich man whose ground brought forth plentifully;" and whose only object appeared to be, first, to acquire a handsome fortune, and then to retire from business, and live at his ease. This also appears to be the character which is blessed by wicked men, but *abhorred* of God.—Psa. x. 3. A man who deals unfairly with men gains not their blessing, but their curse. Men in general regard only themselves: so long, therefore, as any person deals justly with them, they care not what his conduct is towards God. But it is affecting to think that the very character which they bless and envy, God abhors. The decision of heaven is nothing less than this, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." So far is the love of this world from being the less dangerous on account of its falling so little under human censure, that it is the more so. If we be guilty of any thing which exposes us to the reproach of mankind, such reproaches may assist the remonstrances of conscience, and of God in carrying conviction to our bosoms; but of that for which the world acquits us we shall be exceedingly disposed to acquit ourselves.

It has long appeared to me that this species of covetousness, will, in all probability, prove the eternal overthrow of more characters among professing people, than almost any other sin; and this because it is almost the only sin which may be indulged, and a profession of religion at the same time supported. If a man be a drunkard, a fornicator, an adulterer, or a liar—if he rob his neighbor, oppress the poor, or deal unjustly—he must give up his pretensions to religion; or if not, his religious connexions, if they are worthy of being so denominated, will give him up: but he may "love the world, and the things of the world," and at the same time retain his character. If the depravity of the human heart be not subdued by the grace of God, it will operate. If a dam be placed across some of its ordinary channels, it will flow with greater depth and rapidity in those which remain. It is thus, perhaps, that avarice is most prevalent in old age, when the power of pursuing other vices has in a great measure subsided. And thus it is with religious professors whose hearts are not right with God. They cannot figure away with the profane, nor indulge in gross immoralities: but they can love the world supremely, to the neglect of

God, and be scarcely amenable to human judgment.

And whatever may prove the overthrow of a mere professor may be a temptation to a good man, and greatly injure his soul. Of this the case of Lot, when he parted with Abraham, furnishes an affecting example. When a situation was put to his choice, "he lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where;" and he took up his residence in in Sodom. He had better have dwelt in a wilderness than among that debauched people: but he consulted worldly advantages, and the spiritual well-being of his family was overlooked. And what was the consequence? It is true, he was a righteous man, and his righteous soul was grieved with the filthy conversation of the wicked from day to day: but he could have but very little influence over them; while they on the contrary, found means of communicating their odious vices to his family. Some of his daughters appear to have been married while in Sodom; and when the city was to be destroyed, neither they nor their husbands could be persuaded to make their escape, and so probably perished in the overthrow. The heart of his wife was so attached, it seems, to what she had left behind, that she must needs *look back*; for which she was rendered a monument of divine displeasure. And as to his two single daughters, though they escape with him to the mountain, yet they had learnt so much of the ways of Sodom as to cover his old age with infamy. This, together with the loss of all his substance, was the fruit of the "well-watered plain," which he had fixed his eyes upon, to the neglect of his spiritual interest. Yet how frequently is the same part acted over again! In the choice of settlements for ourselves, or our children, how common is it to overlook the immorality of the place, the irreligiousness of the connexions, or the want of a Gospel ministry; and to direct our inquiries only to temporal advantages! From the same principle, also, many have dealt largely in speculation, and plunged into engagements far beyond their circumstances. The hope of making a fortune, as it is termed, by some lucky hit, draws them into measures which ruin, not only themselves, but many who confide in them. That mere worldly men should act in this manner is not a matter of surprise; but that men professing to fear God should imitate them . . . "this is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation."

Farther: Many have fallen sacrifices not only to the love of the world, but to a *conformity to it*.—These are not the same thing, though frequently found in the same person. The object of the one is principally the acquisition of wealth; the other respects the

manner of spending it. That is often penurious; this wishes to cut a figure, and to appear like people of fashion. The former is "the lust of the eye:" the latter is "the pride of life." We need not affect singularity in things indifferent; but to engage in the chase of fashionable appearance is not only an indication of a vain and little mind, but is certainly inconsistent with pressing towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. The desire of making an appearance has ruined many people in their circumstances, more in their characters, and most of all in their souls. We may flatter ourselves that we can pursue these things, and be religious at the same time; but it is a mistake. The vanity of mind which they cherish eats up every thing of a humble, serious, and holy nature: rendering us an easy prey to temptation, when solicited to do as others do in an evil thing. A Christian's rule is the revealed will of God; and where the customs of the world run counter to this, it is his business to withstand them, even though in so doing he may have to withstand a multitude, yea, and a multitude of people of fashion: but if we feel ambitious of their applause, we shall not be able to endure the scorn which a singularity of conduct will draw upon us. Thus we shall be carried down the stream by the course of this world; and shall either fall into the gulf of perdition, or, if any good thing should be found in us towards the Lord God of Israel, it will be almost indiscernible and useless. In short, such characters are certainly in a backsliding state, whether they ever be recovered from it or not. The case of the Laodiceans seems to approach the nearest to theirs of anything which in Scripture occurs to me. They were "neither cold nor hot;" neither the decided friends of Christ, nor his avowed enemies; they could not relinquish the world in favor of religion, yet neither could they let religion alone. They were vainly puffed up with a notion of their wealth, their wisdom, and their finery; saying, "I am rich, and increased in goods, and have need of nothing;" but, in the account of the faithful and true witness, they were "poor, and wretched, and miserable, and blind, and naked." Such a decision ought to make us tremble at the thought of aspiring to imitate people of fashion.

Finally: There is another species of departure from God which it becomes me to notice, as many in the present age have fallen sacrifices to it. This is, *taking an eager and deep interest in political disputes.*—The state of things in the world has of late been such as to attract the attention, and employ the conversation, of all classes of people. As success has attended each of the contending parties, the minds of men, according to their views and attachments, have been affected: some with fear and dismay, lest their party interests should be ruined; others with the most sanguine hopes, as if the world were shortly to be emancipated, war abolished, and all degrees of men rendered happy. This is one of those strong winds of temptation that occasionally arise in the troubled ocean of this world, against which those who are bound to a better had need to be on their guard. The flattering objects held out by revolutionists were so congenial with the wishes of humanity, and their pretences to disinterested philanthropy so fair, that many religious people, for a time, forgot their own principles. While gazing on the splendid spectacle, it did not occur to them that *the wicked*, whatever name they assumed, *would do wickedly.* By observing the progress of things, however, they have been convinced that all hopes of the state of mankind being essentially meliorated by any means short of the prevalence of the gospel are visionary, and have accordingly turned their attention to better things. But some have gone greater lengths. Their whole heart has been engaged in this pursuit. It has been their meat and their drink: and this being the case, it is not surprising that they have become indifferent to religion; for these things cannot consist with each other. It is not only contrary to the whole tenor of the New Testament, but tends in its own nature to eat up true religion. If any worldly matter, however lawful in itself engage our attention inordinately, it becomes a snare; and more so in matters that do not come within the line of our immediate duty. But if, in attending to it, we are obliged to neglect what is manifestly our duty, and to overleap the boundaries of God's holy word, let us look to it: beyond these boundaries is a pit, in which there is reason to fear great numbers have been lost. There were many in the early ages of Christianity, who "despised government," and were "not afraid to speak evil of dignities:" but were they good men? Far from it. They were professors of Christianity, however: for they are said to have "escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of Christ:" yea, and what is more, they had attained the character of Christian *teachers.* But of what description? "False teachers, who privily brought in damnable heresies, denying the Lord who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction; whose ways though followed by many, were pernicious, occasioning "the way of truth to be evil spoken of." To copy the examples of such men is no light matter.

When a man's thoughts and affections are filled with such things as these, the

Scriptures become a kind of *dead letter*, while the speeches and writings of politicians are the *lively oracles*: spiritual conversation is unheard, or, if introduced by others, considered as a flat and uninteresting topic; and leisure hours, whether sitting in the house or walking by the way, instead of being employed in talking and meditating on divine subjects, are engrossed by things which do not profit. Such are the rocks among which many have made shipwreck of faith and a good conscience.

Whatever may be the duty of a nation in extraordinary cases, there is scarcely any thing in all the New Testament inculcated with more solemnity than that individuals and especially Christians, should be obedient, peaceable, and loyal subjects; nor is there any sin much more awfully censured than the contrary conduct. It requires not only that we keep within the compass of the laws, (which is easily done by men of the most unprincipled minds,) but that we honor and *intercede with God* for those who administer them. These duties were pressed particularly upon the Romans, who, by their situation, were more exposed than others to the temptations of joining in factions and conspiracies, which were almost continually at work in that tumultuous city.

Nor does the danger belong exclusively to one side. We may sin by an adherence to the *measures* of a government, as well as by an opposition to them. If we enlist under the banners of the party in power, *considered as a party*, we shall be disposed to vindicate or palliate all their proceedings, which may be very inconsistent with Christianity. Paul, though he enjoined obedience to the existing government, yet was never an advocate for Roman ambition; and, when addressing himself to a governor, did not fail to "reason on righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come," It is our duty, no doubt, to consider that many things which seem evil to us might appear otherwise, if all the circumstances of the case were known; and therefore to forbear passing hasty censures: but, on the other hand, we ought to be aware of applauding every thing that is done, lest, if it be evil, we be partakers of other men's sins, and contribute to their being repeated.

While some, burning with revolutionary zeal, have imagined they could discover all the wonderful events of the present day in Scripture prophecy, and have been nearly blinded to the criminality of the principal agents; others, by a contrary prejudice, have disregarded the works of the Lord and the operations of his hand. What ever may be said of means and instruments we must be strangely insensible not to see the hand of God in the late overturnings among the papal powers; and if we be induced by political attachment, instead of joining the inhabitants of heaven in a song of praise, to unite with the *merchants of the earth* in their lamentations, are we not carnal? There is no need of vindicating or palliating the measures of men, which may be wicked in the extreme; but neither ought we to overlook the hand of God.

The great point with Christians should be, an attachment to government *as government*, irrespective of the party which administers it; for this is right, and would tend more than any thing to promote the kingdom of Christ. We are not called to yield up our consciencies in religious matters, nor to approve of what is wrong in those which are civil; but we are not at liberty to deal in acrimony, or evil speaking. The good which results to society from the very worst government upon earth is great when compared with the evils of anarchy. On this principle it is probable the apostle enjoined obedience to *the powers that were*, even during the reign of Nero. Christians are soldiers under the King of kings: their object should be to conquer all ranks and degrees of men to the obedience of faith.—But, to do this, it is necessary that they avoid all those embranglements and disputes which retard their main design. If a wise man wishes to gain over a nation to any great and worthy object, he does not enter into their little differences, nor embroil himself in their party contentions; but, bearing good-will to all, seeks the general good: by these means he is respected by all, and all are ready to hear what he has to offer. Such should be the wisdom of Christians. There is enmity enough for us to encounter without unnecessarily adding to it.

If a Christian be under the necessity of siding with a party, undoubtedly he ought to act in favor of that which appears to him the best; but even in this case it is not becoming him to enter with eagerness into their disputes. Let worldly men, who thirst after preferment, busy themselves in a contested election—(they have their reward)—but let Christians, if called to appear, discharge their duty, and retire from the tumultuous scene.

By entering deeply into the *party* contentions of the nation, religious people will be charged, on both sides in their turn, with disloyalty; and, it may be, not always without a cause. Fifty years ago that party was out of power which at present is in power. At that time the charge of disloyalty was directed against them; and they were then denominated *patriots*. It is possible that many who now seem to abhor a spirit of disaffection towards administrative government would be themselves not the best affected were the other side to recover

its authority. But, if we enter into the spirit of the gospel, though we may have our preferences of men and measures, we shall bear good-will to all; and, whoever be at the head of affairs, shall reverence "the powers that be." Whatever be our private opinion of *the men*, we shall respect and honor *the rulers*. That loyalty which operates only with the prevalence of a party, whichever it be, is at a great remove from the loyalty enjoined by the Scriptures.

By standing aloof from all parties *as such*, and approving themselves the friends of government and good order, by whomsoever administered, Christians would acquire a dignity of character worthy of their profession, would be respected by all, and possess greater opportunities of doing good: while, by a contrary conduct, they render one part of the community their enemies, and the other, I fear, derive but little spiritual advantage from being their friends.

ON THE SYMPTOMS OF A BACKSLIDING SPIRIT.

It was reckoned a matter of consequence in cases of leprosy, real or supposed, that the true state of the party should be examined, and judgment given accordingly: and by how much a moral disease is more odious, contagious, and dangerous, than one that is natural, by so much is it more necessary to form a true judgment concerning it. Every spot was not a leprosy; and every sinful imperfection in a Christian professor does not denominate him a backslider. Paul had to lament the body of death: he had not attained, nor was he already perfect; yet he pressed forward; and while this was the case he could not be said to draw back. On the other hand, every departure from God must not be reckoned a mere imperfection which is common to good men. We are extremely apt, in certain cases, to flatter ourselves that our spots are only the spots of God's children, or such as the best of men are subject to, and therefore to conclude that there is nothing very dangerous about them. We do not pretend to deny that we have our faults: but are ready to ask, "What have we done so MUCH against thee?" This self-justifying spirit, however, so far from indicating any thing favorable, is a strong mark of the contrary. It is said of Ephraim, "He is a merchant, the balances of deceit are in his hand: he loveth to oppress. And Ephraim said, Yet I am become rich: I have found me out substance: in all my labors they shall find none iniquity in me that were sin." A more finished picture of a modern oppressor could not be drawn. He studies to keep within the limits of the law, and defies any man to impeach his character: he has imperfections, but they are only such as are common to good men: there is nothing criminal to be found in him: yet he is carrying on at the time a system of iniquity.

The apostle Paul speaks of a certain state of mind which he feared he should find in the Corinthians: that of their "having sinned, and not repented of their deeds." This it is which denominates a man a backslider; and which, so long as it continues, deprives him of any scriptural foundation for concluding himself interested in forgiving mercy.—What are the particular symptoms of this state of mind is the object of our present inquiry.

If our departing from the Lord have issued in some outward misconduct, there is no need of inquiring into the proofs of it, as the thing speaks for itself; but, if its operations have been at present only internal, the inquiry may be highly necessary, that we may become acquainted with our condition, and that the disease may be healed ere it finishes its operations. Farther, though it may be out of all doubt that we have sinned, yet it may be a matter of uncertainty whether or not we have repented: if we imagine we have when we have not, the consequence may be of the most serious nature. Let the following observations, then, be attended to.

First: *If religious duties are attended to rather from custom or conscience than love*, we must either never have known what true religion is, or, in a great degree, have lost the spirit of it.—It is possible that we may have been guilty of no particular outward evil, so as to have fallen under the censure of the world, or of even our nearest connections, and yet have so far lost the spirit of religion as to be really in a backsliding state. The exercises of prayer, reading the Scriptures, hearing the word, and giving something to the poor, may be kept up in form, and yet be little, if any thing, more than a form. The church of Ephesus was not accused of any particular outward misconduct; but they had "left their first love." Where this is the case, however, much will be neglected, especially of those parts of duty which fall not under the eye of creatures. It is supposed of the church just referred to, that they had relaxed, if not in the actual performance, yet in the manner of performing their religious exercises; therefore they are exhorted to "repent, and to do their first works." A departure from our first love is commonly the first step of a backsliding course. Perhaps, if the truth were known, there are few open falls but what are preceded by a secret departure of heart from the living God.

Secondly: *If we have fallen into any particular sin, which exposes us to the censures*

of our friends, and instead of confessing it with sorrow are employed in defending or palliating it, it is a certain proof that we are at present under the power of it.—There are some sins that cannot be defended; but there are others which will admit of much being said on their behalf; and it is admirable with what ingenuity men will go about to find excuses where self is concerned.—People that you would hardly think possessed of common sense will, in this case, be singularly quick-sighted, discerning every circumstance that may make in their favor, or serve to extenuate their fault. The cunning of the old serpent, which appeared in the excuses of our first parents, seems here to supply the place of wisdom. This self-justifying spirit is a very dangerous symptom: while it continues there is no hope of a good issue. We read of the deceitfulness of sin; and truly it is with great propriety that deceit is ascribed to it. Perhaps there are few persons who are employed in justifying their failings, but who are first imposed upon, or brought to think, some how, that they are, if not quite justifiable, yet very excusable. Sin, when *we* have committed it, loses its sinfulness, and appears a very different thing to what it did in others. David's indignation could rise against the man that had taken a ewe-lamb, while to his own conduct, which was much more criminal, he was blinded! When any sin is committed by *us*, it is common for it to assume *another name*; and by means of this we become easily reconciled to it, and are ready to enter on a vindication of it. Covetousness will admit of a defence under the names of prudence, industry, or frugality; conformity to the world may be pleaded for as an exercise of sociability and good breeding; unchristian resentment, as necessary self-defence; foolish levity, as innocent mirth; malignant contentions, as zeal for the truth; and indifferences to the truth, as candor, or liberality of sentiment.

Thirdly: *Though we do not defend or palliate our sin in words, yet, if we continue in the practice of it*, we may be certain we have not repented.—All true repentance is followed by a forsaking of the evil, and, where this effect is not produced, there can be no scriptural ground to hope for forgiveness. There are sins, as before observed, which will admit of no defence. If a person be convicted of them, he can do no other than own himself in the wrong, or at least be silent: yet he may feel no sorrow on their account, nor scarcely any intention to forsake them. When Samuel reproved Saul for his rebellion against the commandment of the Lord, assuring him that God had rejected him from being king, and had given the kingdom to a neighbor of his that was better than he, he was confounded, and compelled to say, "I have sinned:" yet the only concern he discovered was on account of having lost his *honor*; and, as soon as he suspected who was his rival, he sought to slay him. Even Solomon discovered a very similar disposition. Instead of lamenting and forsaking the sin for which he had been reproved, as soon as he knew that Jeroboam had been annointed by the prophet Ahijah, he "sought to kill him." A sullen silence under reproof, and a perseverance in the evil, are certain signs of a hard and impenitent heart.

Fourthly: *Though we should refrain from the practice of the evil, yet, if it be only a temporary effect of conviction*, there is no true repentance.—It is very common for persons, when they first fall into any gross sin, to feel ashamed and alarmed, to wish they had not acted as they have, and to resolve that they will do so no more: and this, though the love of the evil be the same, and on the first temptation that returns it is committed again, is nevertheless frequently mistaken for repentance. When Saul's life was spared by David, and his groundless malice against him detected, his heart seemed to relent: he felt ashamed, owned his sin, lifted up his voice and wept, and promised to do so no more; but this was not repentance. David appears to have suspected it at the time; for he would not trust himself in his hands; but gat him up into the hold: and the event justified his conduct. The first opportunity that offered, Saul returned to the folly that he had condemned.—A temporary abstinence from evil may also be produced by some *alarming providence*. When judgments overtake us, and conscience tells us that it is the hand of the Lord stretched out against us for our sin, the mind is appalled with fear, and so ceases to be in a state to pursue its favorite devices. But if, as soon as the pressing hand of providence is removed, the heart returns, like a spring, to its former position, there is no reason to consider its temporary depression as containing any true repentance.

Dr. Owen has expressed these sentiments with that unction of spirit, and deep insight into the human heart, which is peculiar to himself:—

"There are two occasions," says he, "wherein men who are contending with any sin may seem to themselves to have mortified it.—First, when it hath had some sad eruption to the disturbance of their peace, terror of their consciences, dread of scandal, and evident provocation of God. This awakens and stirs up all that is in the man, and amazes him, fills him with abhorrency of sin, and himself for it; sends him to God, makes him cry out as for life, to abhor his lust as hell, and to set himself

against it. The whole man, spiritual and natural, being now awakened, sin shrinks in its head, appears not, but lies as dead before him. As when one that hath drawn nigh to an army in the night, and hath killed a principal person, instantly the guards awake, men are roused up, and strict inquiry is made after the enemy; who, in the mean time, until the noise and tumult be over, hides himself, or lies like one that is dead, yet with firm resolution to do the like mischief again upon the like opportunity.—Secondly: In a time of some judgment, calamity, or pressing affliction. The heart is then taken up with thoughts and contrivances of flying from the present troubles, fears, and dangers. This, as a convinced person concludes, is to be done only by relinquishment of sin, which gains peace with God. It is the anger of God in every affliction that galls a convinced person. To be quit of this, men resolve at such times against their sins. Sin shall never more have any place in them; they will never again give up themselves to the service of it. Accordingly sin is quiet, stirs not, seems to be mortified: not indeed that it has received any one wound, but merely because the soul hath possesed its faculties whereby it should exert itself, with thoughts inconsistent with the motions thereof; which when they are laid aside, sin returns again to its former life and vigor. Of this we have a full instance in Psa. lxxviii. 32—38: 'For all this they sinned still, and believed not for his wondrous works. Therefore their days did he consume in vanity, and their years in trouble. When he slew them, then they sought him: and they returned and inquired early after God. And they remembered that God was their rock, and the most high God their redeemer. Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues. For their heart was not right with him, neither were they steadfast in his covenant.' I no way doubt but that when they sought and returned, and inquired earnestly after God, they did it with full purpose of heart, as to the reliquishment of their sins. This is expressed in the word *returned*. To *turn*, or *return*, unto the Lord is by a relinquishment of sin. And this they did *early*, with earnestness and diligence; but yet their sin was unmortified for all this (ver. 36, 37:) and this is the state of many humiliations in the days of affliction, and a great deceit in the hearts of believers themselves lies oftentimes herein."*

When a professor of religion has fallen into some odious vice, and wishes to shelter himself from the censures of his connexions, you will often hear him allege, "I have *repented:*" whereas it amounts to little more than the shame and alarm above described, as his after conduct very frequently proves. Indeed it is not of the nature of true repentance to *talk* of having repented, and especially for the purpose of evading a faithful censure.

Fifthly: *Though we should refrain from the open practice of the sin, and that for a continuance, yet, if it be merely from prudential or selfish considerations*, we may be certain that we have not yet repented it.—Though we had no religion, and pretended to none, we might find various inducements to refrain from gross immoralities. They affect our interest, our health, and our reputation: it is on such principles that mere worldly men will guard against them; and, if we act from the same motives, wherein are we better than they? Or if the dread of future punishment may be supposed to have some influence upon us, this is a very different thing from the fear of the Lord, which is to *hate* evil. And, where the motives for abstaining from any evil are merely prudential or selfish, we shall abstain from very little more than that which falls under the eye of creatures. Our watchfulness will respect little, if any thing, more than outward actions. The daily care of our lives will be, not how we shall please God, but how we shall conceal the prevailing dispositions of our hearts from those about us—a task this as difficult as it is mean; for whatever occupies our thoughts and affections will on various occasions, notwithstanding our utmost care, escape us. Looks, gestures, manner of speaking and acting, as well as words and deeds themselves, betray what is predominant within. Hence it is that we generally deceive ourselves in these matters. We often fancy our character to be unknown when it is well known: and, if it were otherwise, all is naked and open to the eyes of him with whom we have to do. Of this we may be certain, that while our chief concern is to hide our sins from those about us, should we be summoned to give an account of our stewardship, it will appear that we *have sinned, and not repented of our deeds;* and wherein this differs from going down to the grave *with our guilt upon our heads* it is difficult to say.

Sixthly, *If we take pleasure in talking of the evil, or in dwelling upon it in our thoughts*, it is a certain sign of the same thing. True repentance works in a way of silent shame and self-abasement—"That thou mayest remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame, when I am pacified towards thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God." When men can talk and even write of their former wicked courses with light-

*On The Mortification of Sin in Believers. Chap. V.

ness, it is a certain proof that whatever repentance they have had they do not *at present* repent of it; and though nothing be said or written, yet if such things occupy our thoughts, imaginations, and affections, it is much the same. A mind full of this must needs be lacking of those spiritual exercises, which render us that we shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and those that are such are fitly enough described as having "forgotten that they were purged from their old sins." If old sins are thought of with new delight, they are re-acted and persisted in; and where this continues to be the case, the guilt of them must remain upon us, and may be found upon our heads when we go down to the grave

Lastly, *If we trifle with temptation, or be not afraid of putting ourselves in the way of it, or even of being led into it,* we may be certain that at present we have not repented of our sin.—It is a saying almost grown into a proverb, He that is not afraid of temptation is not afraid of sin, and he that is not afraid of sin must needs be in danger of being destroyed by it. If, after having been repeatedly drawn into sin by associating in certain companies, or engaging in certain pursuits, we can nevertheless run into them again without fear, we cannot possibly have repented of our deeds. Nay more, though we should fear to plunge ourselves into temptation, yet if when providence brings us into such situations and companies, our hearts secretly rejoice in it, this is no less an evidence of our impenitent state than the other. True repentance will not only teach us to shun the way of evil, but to be averse to every avenue that leads to it. If, therefore, we either run into temptation, or are glad when we are led into it, we are beyond all doubt under the power of it.

ON THE INJURIOUS AND DANGEROUS EFFECTS OF SIN LYING ON THE CONSCIENCE UNLAMENTED.

It is a dangerous thing to fall into sin, whether secretly or openly, and the effects of it, sooner or later, will certainly be felt; but to continue in it is much more so. A very heavy threatening is denounced against God's open enemies for their *persisting* in sin: "God shall wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of such an one as *goeth on still* in his trespasses" But the same thing in persons who have known the way of righteousness, must be abundantly more offensive. "He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not be correct." There is a remedy at hand of God's providing a *propitiation* for our sins: and it is declared, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." But if instead of confessing our sins on the head of this propitiation, and imploring mercy in his name, we sink into hardness of heart, neglect prayer, shun the company of the faithful, and efface the remembrance of one sin only by the commission of another, what have we to expect!

I am aware that it is one of the devices of Satan, after having drawn a soul from God, and entagled him in the net of his own corruptions, to persuade him that the prayer of faith in his circumstances would be presumption; and that it is much more modest and becoming for him to stand aloof both from God and his people. And if by faith were meant, what some would seem to understand by it, a working up ourselves into a persuasion that owing to the immutability of God, all is safe and right, whatever be our spirit or conduct, it would be presumptuous enough: but genuine faith in Christ is never out of season. The greater our sin has been the greater reason there is for us to confess it upon the head of the gospel sacrifice, and to plead for mercy in his name. We may not be able to go, considering ourselves as Christians: but this affords no reason why we should not go as sinners.

The injury and danger of such a state of mind will appear from a consideration of the effects which it produces; and must continue to produce, if not healed by a return to God by Jesus Christ.

First, *It will necessarily deprive us of all true enjoyment in religion,* and by consequence, of all that preservation to the heart and mind which such enjoyment affords.—The principal sources of enjoyment to a Christian that walketh spiritually, are communion with God and his people! but to him that is out of the way these streams are dried up: or, which is the same thing in effect to him, they are so impeded as not to reach him. Guilt, shame, darkness, and defilement have taken possession of the soul: love is quenced, hope clouded, joy fled, prayer restrained, and every other grace enervated. It becomes the holiness of God to frown upon us under such a state of mind, by withholding the light of his countenance; and if it were otherwise, we have no manner of desire after it. Such was the state of David after he had sinned, and before he had repented; the joys of God's salvation were far from him. The thirty-second and thirty-eighth Psalms appear to have been written, as has already been observed, after his recovery: but he there describes what was the state of his mind previous to it. There is much meaning in what he sets out with in the first of these psalms: "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, and whose sin is covered—Blessed

is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile!" He knew the contrary of this by bitter experience. Guilt and defilement had eaten up all his enjoyment. "When I kept silence, (saith he,) my bones waxed old, through my roaring all the day long: for day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer." It does not appear that he fully desisted from prayer; but there was none of that freedom in it which he was wont to enjoy. It was *roaring* rather than praying: and God is represented as disregarding it. In the thirty-eighth psalm he speaks of the rebukes of God's wrath, and the chastening of his hot displeasure; of his arrows sticking fast in him, and his hand pressing him sore: of there being no soundness in his flesh because of his anger, nor rest in his bones because of his sin. There is one expression exceedingly appropriate: "My wounds stink and are corrupt, because of my foolishness." A wound may be dangerous at the time of its being received; but much more so if it be neglected till the humors of the body are drawn towards it. In this case it is hard to be healed; and the patient has not only to reflect on his heedlessness in first exposing himself to danger, but on his *foolishness* in so neglecting the prescribed remedy. Such was the state of his mind, till, as he informs us, he "acknowledged" his trasgressions, and was "sorry" for his sin.

And as there can be no communion with God, so neither can there be any with his people. If our sin be known, it must naturally have occasioned a reservedness, if not an exclusion from their society. Or if it be unknown, we shall be equally unable to enjoy communion with them. Guilt in our consciences will beget shame, and incline us rather to stand aloof than to come near them; or if we go into their company, it will prove a bar to freedom. There is something at first sight rather singular in the language of the apostle John: but upon close inspection, it will be found to be perfectly just; "If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another."

But if we are deprived of fellowship with God and his people, from what can we derive consolation? If we have had only a name to live, and been dead, the joy arising from vain hope may possibly be supplied by carnal pleasures. We may drown reflection by busying ourselves in worldly pursuits, and in short, returning like the dog to his vomit, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire: but if we have any true religion in us, we cannot do this; and then what is there under the sun that can yield us relief!

Nor shall we be deprived merely of the enjoyments of religion, but of all that preservation for the soul which they afford. The *peace of God* is represented as that which *keeps* or fortifies *our hearts and minds*. Without this the heart will be in continual danger of being seduced by the wiles, or sunk by the pressures of this world; and the mind of being drawn aside from the simplicity of the gospel.

Secondly, *It will render us useless in our generation.*—The great end of existence with a good man, is to live to him who died for us and rose again. If God bless us, it is that like Abraham we may be blessings to others. Christians are said to be the salt of the earth; but while we are in the state above described, we are as "salt that has lost its savor," which is "good for nothing;" or as a light that is hid under a vessel. Of what use with respect to religion are we in our familes, while this is the case? Neither servants nor children can think well of religion from any thing they see in us; and when we go into the world, and mingle among mankind in our dealings, in whose conscience does our conversation or behaviour plant conviction? Where is the man, who, on leaving our company, has been compelled by it to acknowledge the reality of religion? Or if we occupy a station in the church of God (and this character may belong to the minister no less than to another man) we shall do little or no good in it; but be as vessels in which the Lord taketh no pleasure. There is a threatening directed against vain pastors, which ought to make a minister tremble. "Woe to the idol shepherd, that leaveth the flock! The sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye: his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened." Perhaps one of the greatest temptations to backsliding in ministers may lie in this way: being selected from their brethren, and chosen to the office of public instructors, they are in danger of indulging in self-valuation. A man may labor night and day in his study, and all to get accomplished, that he may shine before the people. When this is the case the preacher is his own idol, and it may be, that of the people. He feels also little or no regard to the charge he has undertaken, but is ready to desert it whenever a difficulty arises, or any opportunity offers of improving his circumstances. The consequence is, the sword of the Lord is upon "his arm"—he does no manner of execution in his work; and upon his "right eye"—whatever proficiency he may make in science, or polite accomplishments, he has but little, if any, spiritual understanding in the things of God. This character may respect ungodly preachers, such to whom the Jewish nation were given

up for their rejection of Christ; but there is no sin committed by the most ungodly man, of which the most godly is not in danger.

Thirdly, *We shall not only be useless, but injurious to the cause of Christ.*—Indeed it is impossible to stand neuter in this cause. If we do no good, we shall do harm; not only as cumberers of the ground, occupying that place in society which might be better filled by others, but as giving a false representation of religion, and diffusing a savor of death among mankind. If our domestics infer nothing favorable to religion from our conduct in the family, they will infer something unfavorable; and if there be but little good to be seen in our example, it is well if there be not much evil; and this will surely be imitated. Who can calculate what influence the treachery, unchastity, and murder committed by David, had upon his family? We know that each was acted over again by Ammon and Absolom. And thus many a parent has seen his own sins repeated in his posterity; and perhaps, if he had lived longer he might have seen them multiplied still more to his shame and confusion.

The servants of God are called to bear testimony for him: "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord of Hosts." This is not done merely by words, but by deeds. There is a way of bearing witness to the reality and importance of religion by a zealous perseverance in it, to its dignity by our firmness, to its happy influence by contentedness and cheerfulness, and to its purity by being holy in all manner of conversation: and this is a kind of testimony which is more regarded than any other. Men in common form their judgments of religion more by what they see in the professor of it, than by the profession itself. Hence it was that David by his deed is said "given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme." They were not contented with reproaching him, but must speak against God and religion on his account. In this view he considered his sin when he was brought to repentance for it. "Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight.—Do good in thy pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem." If his sin had not greatly dishonored God's name, and, as it were, broken down the walls of Zion, such language would not have appeared among his lamentations. Things operate much the same to this day. Whatever evil is done by a professor, it is ascribed to his religion. In this view we may justly consider our unchristian conduct as bearing false witness of God; for it is giving false representations of his gospel and government to the world. A grasping selfish spirit is saying to those around us, that after all which we have professed of living by faith in a portion beyond death, the present world is the best, and therefore we are for making sure of that, and running all hazards as to the other. In like manner a cruel and revengeful disposition towards those who have offended us, is saying, that Christianity, after all its professions of meekness and forgiveness of injuries, renders its adherents no better than others. And when a Christian professor is detected of having privately indulged in the lusts of the flesh, the conclusion that is drawn from it is, that there is nothing in religion but outside appearance, and that religious people are the same as others in secret. It is impossible to say how much such conduct operates to the hardening of men in sin, to the quenching of their convictions, to the weakening of the hands of God's servants, and to the stumbling of persons who are inquiring the way to Zion.

These things, if we be mere professors, may have but little effect upon us. We do not care for God's being dishonored, provided we do but get pardoned at last: but, if there be any true religion about us, it will be otherwise. An ingenuous mind will feel more for the dishonor which he has done to Christ, and injury to his fellow-creatures, than for the reproach which he has brought upon himself.

Fourthly: *We are in the utmost danger of falling into future temptations, and so of sinking deeper, and falling farther from God.*—So long as sin remains upon the conscience unlamented, it is like poison in the constitution: it will be certain to operate, and that in a way that shall go on more to kill all holy resolution, to harden the heart, and to defile the imaginations and desires. "Whoredom and wine, and new wine, take away the heart." It was from sad experience of the defiling nature of past sin that David, when he came to himself, prayed, "Create in me a *clean heart*, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

A mind thus enfeebled, stupified, and defiled, must needs be in a very unfit condition to resist new temptations. The inhabitants of a besieged city, who are weakened by famine and disease, and discouraged by a number of disaffected persons within their walls, have no heart to resist, but stand ready to listen to the first proposals of the besiegers.

And in proportion as we are disabled for resistance, it may be expected that the tempter will renew his attempts upon us. If Satan has any influence upon the human mind, it may be supposed that he acts with design, and knows how to avail himself of the most favorable seasons to effect his purpose. And this we find to be true by experience. In proportion as we have yielded

to temptation, it will rise in its demands; solicitations, greater in number and in force, will ply our minds. As a resistance of the devil will be followed by his *fleeing from us*, so, on the contrary, a non-resistance of him will be followed by renewed and stronger attempts upon us. One sin makes way for another, and renders us less able to resist, or to return to God by repentance. When once the thief has gained admission into our habitation, he will bid us defiance. "Innumerable evils will compass us about, and our iniquities take hold upon us, so that we shall not be able to look up: they will be more than the hairs of our heads: therefore our hearts will fail us." Samson first yielded to his sensual desires; after this to the intreaties of his Delilah; who, in proportion as she found him pliant to her wishes, increased in her assiduousness, till at length he lost his hair, his liberty, his eyes, and his life.

If we be mere professors, these considerations may affect us but little: we shall continue the willing slaves of our own corruptions, hoping it may be, nevertheless, that we shall some time be brought back again, till, at some unexpected hour, we are taken out of the world. But, if there be any good thing in us toward the Lord God of Israel, this part of the subject must alarm us; for, of all the methods which God takes to punish sin, there is none more awful and more dreaded by a good man than that of being *given up to sin*.

Fifthly: *So long as sin remains upon the conscience unlamented, we are in danger of eternal damnation.*—It may be thought by some that such language is inconsistent with the final perseverance of believers: but it is manifest that our Lord did not so teach the doctrine of perseverance as to render cautions of this kind unnecessary. He did not scruple to declare even to his own disciples, that whosoever should say to his brother, Thou fool, should be in danger of hell fire—that, if they forgave not men their trespasses, neither would God forgive theirs—and if a right hand, or a right eye, caused them to offend, it must be cut off, or plucked out, and least the whole body should be cast into hell.

The object at which sin aims, whether in believers or unbelievers, is *death, eternal death;* and to this it has a natural and direct tendency. The apostle James, in a very affecting manner, describes its process. "Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempted he any man: but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." If it does not in all cases come to this issue, it is not because of its being different as to its nature or tendency in some persons to what it is in others, but because a timely stop is put to its operations. Only let it go on without repentance till it has *finished* its work, and eternal death will be the issue.

Whatever we are, so long as sin lies unlamented upon the conscience, we can have no scriptural foundation to conclude that we are Christians. No real Christian, it is true, will prove an apostate; yet, while we are under the influence of sin, we are moving in the direction which leads to apostacy. If we are contented with a relapsed state of mind, what ground can we have to conclude that it is not our element, or that we have ever been the subjects of true religion? If the waters continue to be naught, it is a sign that the spring has not been healed. There is no reason to think that Judas himself laid his account with such an issue of his treachery as actually came to pass.—During the ministry of our Lord, while he kept the bag, and sometimes made free with its contents, it is probable he nevertheless reckoned himself a good man. He saw many failings in his fellow disciples, and in all other good men; and he might think this to be his. When he had covenanted with the chief priests, it does not appear that he expected his master would be eventually taken and crucified. When they were about to lay hands on him, he had often passed through the midst of them, and gone his way; and he might suppose that it would be so again. "When therefore he saw that he was condemned," he was thrown into a state of terrible amazement, and in the issue "went and hanged himself." Such was the process of an apostate, and such his end. Surely it behoves us to take heed how we trifle with those things, the end of which is death!

ON THE MEANS OF RECOVERY.

Were it not for the hope of being instrumental in saving some from the error of their way, and of inducing others to a greater degree of watchfulness, I should not have written the preceding pages. It can afford no satisfaction to expose the evil conduct of a fellow sinner, or to trace its dangerous effects, unless it be with a view to his salvation or preservation.

It is natural for those who have fallen into sin, unless they be given up to a rejection of all religion, to wish, on some considerations, to be restored. A backsliding state is far from being agreeable. Hence it is that many have prematurely grasped at the promise of forgiveness, and said to their souls, "Peace, peace, when there was no

peace." It is desirable that we be recovered from our backslidings; but it is not desirable that we should think ourselves recovered when we are not so.

As there are many ways by which a convinced sinner seeks peace to his soul, without being able to find it, so it is with a backslider. Self-righteous attempts to mortify sin, and gain peace with God, are not confined to the first period of religious concern. Having, through the power of alarm, desisted from the open practice of sin, many have laboured to derive comfort from this consideration, without confessing their sin on the head, as it were, of the gospel sacrifice. Their sins may be said rather to have been *worn* away from their remembrance, by length of time, than *washed* away by the blood of the cross. But this is not recovery: the hurt, if healed, is healed slightly; and may be expected to break out again. The same way in which, if we be true Christians, we first found rest to our souls, must be pursued in order to recover it; namely, "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." This is the way to which the Scriptures uniformly direct us. "My little children, these things I write unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."—"If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." This was the way in which David was recovered. He confessed his sin with deep contrition, pleading to be purged "with hyssop that he might be clean, and washed that he might be whiter than snow." By this language he could not mean that his sin should be purged away by any thing pertaining to the ceremonial law, for that law made no provision for the pardon of his crimes: he must, therefore, intend that which the sprinkling of the unclean with a bunch of hyssop, dipt in the water of purification, was designed to prefigure; which, as we are taught in the New Testament, was the purging of the conscience, by the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus."

This is the only way in which it is possible to find rest to our souls. As "there is no other name given under heaven, or among men, by which we can be saved," so neither is there any other by which we can be restored. Whatever be the nature of our backsliding from God, this must be the remedy. If it be a *relinquishment of evangelical principles*, we must return to the way, even the highway whither we went. Paul "travailed in birth" for the recovery of the Galatians; and in what did he expect it to consist? In "Christ being formed in them." He also strove to bring back the Hebrews; and all his labors were directed to the same point. His epistle to them is full of *Christ*, and of warnings and of cautions against neglecting and rejecting him. If any man have been perplexed concerning the deity or atonement of Christ, let him humbly and carefully read that epistle: and, if his heart be right with God, it will do him good. If our departure from God have issued in *some gross immorality*, or in *the love of the world*, or in *conformity to it*, the remedy must be the same. It is by this medium, if at all, that the world will be crucified unto us, and we unto the world. If we have no heart to repent, and to return to God by Jesus Christ, we are yet in our sins, and may expect to reap the fruits of them. The Scriptures give no counsel to any thing short of this. They are not wanting, however, in directions that may lead to it, and considerations that may induce it. What these are, I shall now proceed to inquire.

In general I may observe, The Scriptures assure us of *the exceeding great and tender mercy of God, and of his willingness to forgive all those who return to him in the name of his Son.*—It is necessary that we be well persuaded of this truth, lest, instead of applying as supplicants we sink into despair. If an awakened sinner, under his first religious concern, be in danger of this species of despondency, a backslider is still more so. His trangressions are much more heinous in their circumstances than those of the other, having been committed under greater light, and against greater goodness: and, when to this is added the treatment which his conduct must necessarily draw upon him from his religious connections, he may be tempted to relinquish all hopes of recovery, and to consider himself as an outcast of both God and man. Unhappy man! Thy breach may be *great like the sea*, and the language of an awakened conscience may suggest, "Who can heal me?" Yet do not despair. "Hear what God the Lord will speak.—He will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not turn again to folly." Hear what he speaks to the backsliding Israelites, reduced by their sins to the most deplorable state of guilt and wretchedness. "The Lord shall scatter you among the nations, and ye shall be left few in number among the heathen, whither the Lord shall lead you. And there ye shall serve gods, the work of men's hands; but, if *from thence* thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul: when thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice (for the Lord thy God is a merciful God,) he will not forsake thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers, which he sware unto them." The pardo-

ning mercy of God towards those who return to him by Jesus Christ is not limited by such measures as are framed by creatures in their treatment of one another, or by such expectations as, on this account, they are apt to form. There are circumstances which may render it almost impossible for forgiveness to be exercised amongst men; and therefore men are ready to think it must be so with respect to God. But "with the Lord there is mercy, and with him there is plenteous redemption." He will not only pardon, but pardon *abundantly:* "for his thoughts are not our thoughts, nor his ways our ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his ways higher than our ways, and his thoughts than our thoughts.—The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from *all sin.*—If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from *all unrighteousness.*" The threatenings against the *unpardonable sin* itself do not affect the truth of these merciful declarations; for that sin is all along described as excluding *repentance* as well as forgiveness. Heb. vi. 6. The party is supposed to be given up to hardness of heart. If, therefore, we *confess* our sin with contrition, we may be certain it is not unpardonable, and that we shall obtain mercy through the blood of the cross.

But the great question is, *How shall we repent of our sins, and return to God by Jesus Christ?*—Undoubtedly it is much easier to get out of the way than to get in again; to lose the peace of our minds than to recover it. Sin is of a hardening nature; and, the farther we have proceeded in it, the more inextricable are its chains. But, however this be, we either do desire to return, or we do not. If *not*, it will be in vain to address any directions to us. It is right, indeed, for the servants of Christ to point them out, whether we will hear or whether we will forbear, and there leave them; but as to any hope of our recovery, while such is the state of our minds, there can be none. If we can think of our sin without grief, and of the cross of Christ without any meltings of spirit, there is great reason to fear that our "hearts are not right in the sight of God," but that we are yet in the "gall of bitterness, and the bonds of iniquity." If, on the other hand, we *do* desire to return; if, like Israel in the days of Samuel, we "lament after the Lord," we shall readily hearken to every direction given us in his word.

If my reader, supposing him to have backslidden from God, be in such a state of mind, it is with a mixture of hope and tenderness that I attempt to point out to him the means of recovery. Or, should it even be otherwise, I will, nevertheless, endeavor to show him the good and the right way, that at least I may deliver my own soul.

First: *Embrace every possible season of retirement for reading the holy Scriptures, especially those parts which are suited to thy case; and accompany it with prayer*—God's word hid in the heart is not only a preservative against sin, but a restorative from it. It both wounds and heals: if it rebukes, it is with the faithfulness of a friend; or, if it consoles, its consolations carry in them an implication which, if properly understood, will melt us into repentance.

Read especially *those parts of Scripture which are addressed to persons in your situation*, as the second chapter of Jeremiah: or which express the desires of a returning sinner, as the twenty-fifth, thirty-second, thirty-eighth, fifty-first, and hundred-and-thirtieth Psalms. You may not be able to adopt all this language as your own: but it may be useful nevertheless. To read the genuine expressions of a contrite heart may produce at least a conviction of the disparity between the frame of mind possesed by the writer and yourself; and such a conviction may be accompanied with a sensation of shame and grief.

It is also of importance that you read the Scriptures *by yourself.* To read a portion of them in your families is right, and ought not to be neglected; but there is a wide difference, as to personal advantage, between this and reading them alone. Your mind may then be more at liberty for reflection; you can read and pause, and think, and apply the subject to your case.

It is of still greater importance to *unite prayer with it.* Reading the word of God and prayer are duties which mutually assist each other: the one furnishes us with confessions, pleas, and arguments; while the other promotes solemnity and spirituality of mind, which goes further towards understanding the Scriptures than a library of expositions.

It was in one of these seasons of retirement that David put up this petition, "I have gone stray like a lost sheep: seek thy servant, for I do not forget thy commandments." He seems to have had in his thoughts the condition of a poor, wandering sheep, that had left the flock, and the rich pastures whither it was wont to be led; ranging rather like a native of the woods, than one which had been used to be led, and fed, and protected by an owner. Bewildered by its own wanderings, entangled in the thorns and briers of the wilderness, and exposed to beasts of prey, it feels its forlorn condition, and bleats after the shepherd of the flock! Is there nothing in this that may suit thy case? Yes, thou art the man! Thou hast gone astray like a lost sheep, got entangled in thine own corrup-

tions, and knowest not how to find the way back: yet it may be thou hast not *forgotten his commandments*, nor utterly lost the savor of those happy days when walking in them. Let thy prayer then be directed, like that of the Psalmest, to the good Shepherd of the sheep, "Seek thy servant!"

Prayer is a kind of religious exercise which is necessary to accompany all others. "In every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." Solemn approaches to God are adapted to impress the mind with a sense of sin, and to inspire us with self-abhorrence on account of it. It was by a view of the holiness of God that Isaiah felt himself to be "a man of unclean lips;" and by conversing with him that Job was brought to "abhor himself, and repent in dust and ashes." The very exercise of prayer carries in it an implication that *our help must come from above;* a truth which, in all cases, is highly necessary for us to know, and with which, in this case especially, we cannot be too deeply impressed. We easily get out of the way; but, if ever we return to it, it must be by his influence who "restoreth our souls, and leadeth us in the paths of righteousness, for his name's sake."

To tell a person who is out of the way that he has no help in himself, and that if ever he get in again it must be by the restoring grace of God, may seem, to some people, paradoxical and disheartening: but it is a truth, and a truth which, if properly understood and felt, would go farther towards our recovery than we at first may apprehend. Paul found that "when he was weak then he was strong;" and many others have found the same. The more we are emptied of self-sufficiency, the more sensibly shall we feel our dependence, and the more importunately implore that the Lord would save us as it were from ourselves, and restore us "*for his name's sake.*"

This was the way in which we at first found rest for our souls, and this must be the way in which we recover it. An awakened sinner frequently labors hard after peace, without being able to obtain it.—Wherefore? Because he seeks it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law, stumbling at that stumbling stone. In all his labors there is a large portion of self-righteous hope, or an idea that God will pity him on account of his painful endeavors to please him. But this is like bad flesh in a wound, which must be eaten out before it can be healed. If ever he obtain peace, it must be by utterly despairing of all help from himself, and falling, as a sinner entirely lost, into the arms of sovereign mercy.—This is *walking* "in the good old way," which brings *rest to the soul;* and the same sense of our insufficiency which is necessary to find rest in the first instance is equally necessary to find it in all that follow.

We may pray from year to year, and all without effect. It is only "the prayer of faith" that succeeds; the distinguishing characteristic of which is, under a sense of there being no help in us, to lay hold of the mercy and faithfulness of God, as revealed in the gospel. David for a time "groaned," and even "roared, by reason of the disquietness of his heart:" but he obtained no relief from this. On the contrary, he sunk deeper and deeper into despondency. At length, he betook him to another *manner* of praying. "Out of the *depths cried I unto thee.*" . . . . and thou heardest my voice!" We find him here pleading the exceeding *greatness of God's mercy*, and the *plenteousness of his redemption.* Here he found rest for his soul!—Jonah also, for a time, was in much the same state. With a conscience so far awakened as to deprive him of all enjoyment, he retired to the bottom of the ship; and, wearied with the load of his guilt, slept away his time. Even the horror of a tempest did not awaken him. At length, being roused and reproved by heathens, and marked out by lot as the guilty person, he confesses who he is, and what he had done, and advises them to cast him into the sea. Humanity, for a time, struggles with the elements, but in vain—he must be cast away. Think what a state of mind he must at this time have possessed! He is thrown into the deep, is swallowed by a fish, and retains his reason even in that situation; but no light shines upon his soul. Conceiving himself to be on the point of expiring, his heart sighed within him, "I am cast out of thy sight!" But, ere the thought had well passed his mind, another struck him . . . . "Yet will I look again towards thy holy temple!" He looked, and was lightened: "Out of the belly of hell cried I unto thee, and thou heardest my voice!"

Secondly, *Reflect on the aggravating circumstances of thine offences*, or on those things which render it *an evil and bitter thing* to have departed from the living God, and to have sinned against him in the manner thou hast done.—Every return to God begins with reflection. "I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.—Commune with thine own heart upon thy bed, and be still." "If the God against whom I have sinned had been like the idols of this world, I might have been justified in departing from him: but I have acted the part of the backsliding Israelites, who were the only people who had a God worth cleaving to, and yet were the only people distinguished by their fickleness. The world cleave close enough to their gods,

but I have committed those two evils at which the heavens are astonished. I have forsaken the fountain of living waters, and hewed to myself cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water! If the service of the Lord had been a heavy yoke, and if the way of his commandments had been unfruitful and miserable path, I might have some plea for deserting it: but what have I gained except guilt and shame, and wretchedness, by leaving him? Was he a barren wilderness to me, or a land of darkness? How can I answer his tender yet cutting expostulations—"O my people, what have I done unto thee: wherein have I wearied thee? Testify against me!"

"If I had been born and educated a benighted pagan, a deluded mahomedan, or a superstitious papist; if the oracles of God had been withheld from me; or if I had lived all my days in a state of ignorance and insensibility, like multitudes in my native country, the sins that I have committed had been little in comparison of what they now are. I have verged near to the unpardonable sin. It is against *light* and *love* that I have offended. He has been as a husband unto me: but I have forsaken him, and have gone after other lovers. Yet he still invites me to return. And what hindereth? I am not straitened in him, but in my own bowels. Lord save me from myself! Surely I will return to my first husband, for then was it better with me than now."

Thirdly: *Reflect on the goodness of God in having hitherto borne with thee*, and preventing thy sins from fully operating according to their native tendency.—It is a common observation that one sin leads on to another. Of this history and experience furnish many tragical examples. The sauntering indolence of David occasioned his adultery. Adultery, when committed, must be concealed, and this leads to treachery and intrigue. When these fail, recourse is had to murder. And when the murder is effected, to carry on the concealment, the event must be attributed to providence—"The sword devoureth one as well as another!" The connection between uncleanness and blood is strongly marked in the history of human crimes. A large proportion of those who have been publicly executed for the one were induced to perpetrate the horrid deed as a covert to the other. And hast thou been tampering with these vices; playing at the hole of a cockatrice den! How is it that death and hell have not ere now swallowed thee up? Behold that wretch who went but yesterday to suffer the just vengeance of his country, for having murdered the object whom he had first seduced; and see what thou mightest have been! Is it not owing to singular mercy that thy sins have been restrained from their wonted and deadly issues?

It may be, some who have been companions, or at least contemporaries with thee in the first stages of sin, have meanwhile been suffered to make more rapid progress. Their follies have ended in infamy, while thine have been restrained, and comparatively hid. And is it possible, while the public voice has been raised against them, thou hast joined it? "And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? "If the recollection of such things leadeth thee not to repentance, it is a dark sign of a hard and impenitent heart, "treasuring up to itself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God."

Fourthly, *Reflect on the state and exercises of thy mind in former times.*—This was the counsel of the apostle to the Hebrews, who, disheartened by persecution, were half inclined to go back again to Judaism: "Call to remembrance the former days, in which, after that ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions." This was the counsel of our Lord himself to the churches of Ephesus and Sardis: "Remember from whence thou art fallen, and repent."—Remember how thou has received and heard, and hold fast, and repent." Ask thine own soul, Are there no seasons of tenderness in my life which it would be for my profit to recall to my mind? I have professed repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ; and was it only a profession? Was there not a time when my sins were more bitter to me than death, and more dreaded than hell? How is it that I have turned again to folly? Has sin changed its nature, or become less odious? Rather is not the change in me? Was there not a time when the word of the Lord was precious to my soul—when my sabbaths were my happiest days, and godly people my chosen companions? Whence this lamentable change? Is Christ or the gospel less precious than heretofore? I once thought that, if I might but be found in him, and live forever with him, and those that love him, I should not care what I lost or suffered in the present world. And was I all this time deceiving myself? Were my repentance, and faith, and hope, and love, and joy, all counterfeit? I endured reproaches and losses, as I supposed, for his name sake; and is it all in vain? Must I at last be separated forever from him, and have my portion with unbelievers? "O Lord have mercy upon me, a most wretched caitiff, and mise-

rable sinner! I have offended both against heaven and earth, more than my tongue can express! Whither then may I go, or whither shall I flee? To heaven I may be ashamed to lift up mine eyes, and on earth I find no place of refuge or succor. To THEE, therefore, O Lord, do I run: TO THEE do I humble myself. O Lord, my God, my sins are great; but yet have mercy upon me, for thy great mercy. The great mystery, that God became man, was not wrought for small or few offences. Thou didst not give thy Son unto death for little sins only; but for all the greatest sins of the world: so that the sinner returns to thee with his whole heart, as I do here at this present. Wherefore have mercy on me, O God, whose property is always to have mercy. Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for thy great mercy. O Lord, I crave nothing for my own merits, but for thy names sake, that it might be hallowed thereby, and for thy dear Son Jesus Christ's sake."*

This part of our Lord's counsel would apply not only to those who have fallen into gross immoralities, but to such as have deserted the principles of the gospel. It was asked the Galatians, through what medium it was that they first "received the Spirit; by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith." This question proceeds upon the principle of that being the true doctrine which is productive of the best effects; and by the manner in which it is introduced, "This only would I learn of you," it is intimated that the solution is of itself sufficient to determine what the true doctrine is. And what are the effects produced by a relinquishment of the doctrines usually denominated evangelical? Nay, I might say, by only a hesitation concerning them? I appeal to those who have made the trial. Have you the same joy and peace in believing your present principles as you had in your former ones? Can you, or do you, go to a throne of grace with the same holy freedom as heretofore? Do you feel an equal concern for the salvation of your poor ungodly neighbors? Rather is not the far greater part of your zeal consumed in laboring to make proselytes of serious Chrtistians to your new way of thinking? Does the society of those who are like minded with yourself afford that inward satisfaction which you once enjoyed in the fellowship of those whom you are now taught to pity as enthusiasts? If, while professing these things, you were strangers to them, you may answer these questions in the affirmative: but, if otherwise, you will not. "Remember from whence you are fallen, and repent!" "Remember how you have received and heard, and hold fast, and repent."

Fifthly: *Set apart special times to humble yourself before God by fasting and prayer.*—Extraordinary cases require the use of extraordinary means. When a great army was coming against Jehoshaphat, it is said, "he feared, and set himself to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah." But the loss of the soul is of more account to you than the temporal overthrow of a country was to him. When Judah, for its backslidings, was under the frowns of God in Babylon, and had been so for about seventy years, Daniel says, "I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplication, with fasting and sackcloth and ashes." The apostle Paul plainly intimates that there are times wherein we are required to "give ourselves to fasting and prayer." And surely there can be no times in which these means are more necessary than when we have got out of the way, and desire to recover it. There is much meaning in the words, "He set himself to seek the Lord;" and "I set my face unto the Lord God." They denote something more than the ordinary exercises of prayer: even a special fixedness of the thoughts, purposes, and desires, to a particular object; and God has usually honored those extraordinary approaches to him, when influenced by a pure motive with success. It is true, we may attend to duty in a superstitious, or self-righteous spirit; resting in it as an end, instead of using it as a means: but this is not *setting our face unto the Lord God*, or *seeking him*. A day devoted to God in humiliation, fasting, and prayer, occasionally occupied with reading suitable parts of the Holy Scriptures, may, by the blessing of the Holy Spirit, contribute more to the subduing of sin, and the recovery of a right mind, than years spent in a sort of half-hearted exercises.

Sixthly: *To prayer it is necessary to add watchfulness.*—Our Lord unites these together as an antidote against temptation. It has sometimes been one of the devices of Satan, after a backslider has been drawing near to God, and strongly soliciting for mercy, yea, after a time has been set apart for this particular purpose, to ply him afresh with some powerful temptation: and while his mind has been unsuspicious, and it may be, thinking itself to be somewhat secure, on account of having so lately been engaged in earnest devotion, he has been surprised and overcome! The consequence, as might be expected, has been a future neglect of prayer, under the idea that it must

* That which is included in reversed commas is a part of the prayer of Archbishop Cranmer; who, through fear of man, had denied his faith, but was, notwithstanding, burned to death. When brought to execution (which was at Oxford, on March 21, 1556,) he uttered the above prayer; and, on the flames approaching him, first thrust into the fire the hand with which he had signed his recantation.

have been mere hypocrisy before, and would now be adding sin to sin. Instead of depending on spiritual frames for preservation, and especially when they are over, perhaps we ought to expect that our comforts should be succeeded by conflicts. We know it was so in several cases recorded in the scriptures. Immediately after drinking at the smitten rock at Rephidim, Israel was called to fight with Amalek. Paul's thorn in the flesh succeeded to extraordinary revelations. Our Lord himself went up from Jordan into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil.

Seventhly: *In your approaches to the Saviour, let it be under the character in which you first applied to him for mercy, that of a* SINNER.—If you attempt to approach the throne of grace as a good man who was backslidden from God, you may find it impossible to support that character. The reality of your conversion may be doubtful not only in your apprehension, but in itself. Your approach, therefore, must not be as one that 'is washed, and needeth not save to wash his feet:' but as one who is defiled throughout *whose hands and head*, and every part need to be cleansed. Do not employ yourself in raking over the rubbish of your past life in search of evidence that you are a Christian. You will not be able, in your present state of mind, to decide that question: nor would it be of any service to you if you could decide it. One thing is certain: you are a sinner; a poor miserable, and perishing sinner: the door of mercy is open; and you are welcome to enter in. Let your past character then have been what it may and let your conversion be ever so doubtful, if you can from this time relinquish all for Christ, eternal life is before you.

The Laodiceans, who, though composing a Christian church, were doubtful characters, are counselled to deal with Christ in the same manner as sinners deal with him, for riches, for righteousness, and for heavenly wisdom.

Lastly: *In all your supplications be contented with nothing short of a complete recovery.*—It is possible you may obtain so much ascendancy over your evil propensities that they may seem to be slain before you; or, at least, that you are in no particular danger of yielding to them any more; and yet you may not have recovered that holy rest in God, that sweet peace which arises from confessing our sins upon the head of the gospel sacrifice. But while this is the case there is no security against their revival. The first temptation by which you are assaulted may afford lamentable proof that they are yet alive. Nothing will serve as a preservative against the risings of evil propensities, short of *walking with God.* There is much important truth in that declaration of the apostle, "This I say, then, walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh." Sin is not to be opposed so much directly as indirectly; not by mere resistance, but by opposing other principles to it, which shall overcome it. It is not by contending with the fire, especially with combustible materials about us, that we shall be able to quench it; but by dealing plentifully with the opposite element. The pleasures of sense will not be effectually subdued by foregoing all enjoyment; but by imbibing other pleasures, the relish of which shall deaden the heart to what is opposite. It was thus that the apostle became "dead to the world by the cross of Christ." Do not, therefore, reckon thyself restored till thou has recovered communion with God. David, though the subject of deep contrition, yet was not contented without gaining this important point. Till then the poison would still, at times, be rankling in his imagination. Hence arose the following petitions: "Create in me a clean heart O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free Spirit." Make these petitions thy own; and, if God grant the thing that thine heart desireth, go and sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon thee!

THE END.

THE

DISCOURAGEMENTS AND SUPPORTS

OF THE

CHRISTIAN MINISTER;

A DISCOURSE

DELIVERED TO THE REV. JAMES ROBERTSON, AT HIS ORDINATION OVER THE INDEPENDENT CHURCH AT STRETTON, WARWICKSHIRE.

By Robert Hall, A. M.

2 Corinthians iv. 1.—*Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not.*

As you have requested me to address you upon the present occasion, I am persuaded you will deem no apology necessary for the use of that freedom which the nature of the service to which you have invited me demands, combined with those sentiments of high esteem which your character will always inspire. Having, with the accustomed solemnities, been invested with the pastoral office over this church, you will permit me to remind you of the discouragements on the one hand, and supports on the other, which you may reasonably look for in your ministerial warfare, as far as they are naturally suggested to us by the passage of Scripture selected for the basis of our present discourse.

If it be necessary for the private Christian, before he assumes a religious profession, to count the cost, to the minister it cannot be less so, that he may not be surprised by unexpected trials, nor dismayed at the encounter of difficulties for which he has made no preparation. A just estimate of the nature and magnitude is an important qualification for the proper discharge of whatever function we are called to exert. As you are neither a novice in the ministry, nor have failed to reflect deeply on the consequences of your present engagements, you will not suspect me of attempting by the hints which may be suggested, to give you information, but merely to *stir up your pure mind by way of remembrance.*

I. Let me request your attention to the sources of *discouragement* connected with the office you have undertaken.

1. They are such as arise, in part, from the nature of the office itself, which is appointed for the purpose of converting souls to God, and conducting them in the path to eternal life. To you, in common with other Christian pastors, is committed the ministry of reconciliation, the office of promulgating the system of truth which is designed to renew the world and sanctify the church. Under the highest authority you are enjoined to use your utmost efforts "to open blind eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God." The bare mention of such an employment is enough to convince us the difficulties attending it are of no ordinary magnitude, and to make us exclaim with an apostle, "Who is sufficient for these things?"

The minds of men are naturally indisposed to the reception of divine truth. The truths of the gospel are not merely of a speculative nature, which need only to be stated with their proper evidence to ensure success: there are in the mind latent prejudices against which they strongly militate, and which, when excited, naturally produce opposition. Mankind are disposed to think well of themselves, to view their virtues through a magnifying medium, and to cast their deficiencies and vices into the shade. Dissatisfied, as they often are, with their outward condition, they have yet little or no conviction of their spiritual wants; but with respect to these are ready to imagine, with the Laodiceans, that they "are rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing." Hence it is with extreme difficulty they are brought to acquiesce in the humiliating representations made by the oracles of God of their native guilt and misery. They will readily confess they are far from believing that they are actually under the wrath and

displeasure of the Almighty. They feel on the whole, satisfied with themselves, and by setting their supposed good qualities against their bad ones, contrive to adjust their account in such a manner as leaves a considerable balance in their favor. On the mercy of God they feel no objection to profess their reliance; deeming it more decent, and even more safe, than to challenge his justice; but it is easy to perceive that the mercy of which they speak is of such a nature, that they would look upon it as an absurdity to suppose it could be withheld. In short, they are the whole who need no physician.

The gospel presupposes a charge of guilt; it assumes, as an indubitable fact, the universal apostacy of our race, and its consequent liability to perish under the stroke of the divine anger; nor can you acquit yourself of the imputation of handling the word of God deceitfully, if, from false delicacy or mistaken tenderness, you neglect the frequent inculcation of this momentous truth. You will find it, however, no easy matter to fasten the charge upon the conscience; which when it seems to be admitted, will often amount to nothing more than a vague and general acknowledgment, which leaves the heart quite unaffected. To convince effectually is, indeed, the work of a superior agent.

The very attempt to produce that humiliating sense of unworthiness and weakness which is essential to a due reception of the gospel will frequently excite disgust, should it terminate in no worse consequences. You will be reproached as the messenger of evil tidings, and suspected of taking a pleasure in overwhelming the soul with dark and melancholy forebodings. By a part of your hearers you will possibly be regarded as an unnatural character, and as having in your religion a tincture of what is savage and inhuman; in consequence of which, they who refuse to profit by your admonitions will be apt to apply to you the language of the king of Israel, *I hate him, for he always prophesieth evil of me, and not good.* Of the common apostacy, one of the most distinguished features is, a stupefaction and insensibility in relation to whatever is of a spiritual nature, together with a levity and carelessness which it requires the utmost effort of the Christian ministry to dispel.

If you should be successful in awakening a salutary concern in the breasts of your hearers, and exciting them to inquire what they must do to be saved, fresh difficulties await you. The enemy will leave no artifice untried to divert it, and to wear it off by such a succession of cares and vanities, that as much attention and address will be requisite to maintain it till it issues in a saving effect, as to produce it at first. There are many who, after appearing for a time earnestly engaged in the pursuit of salvation, have, in consequence of stifling convictions, become more callous and insensible than ever, as iron is hardened in the fire. The grand scope of the Christian ministry is to bring men home to Christ; but ere they arrive thither, there are numerous by-paths into which those who are awakened are in danger of diverting, and of finding a delusive repose, without coming as humble penitents to the foot of the cross. They are equally in danger of catching at premature consolation, and of sinking into listless despondency. *Withhold thy throat from thirst*, said the prophet Jeremiah, *and thy foot from being unshod; but thou saidst, there is no hope, for I have loved strangers, and after them I must go.* In the pursuit of eternal good, the heart is extremely inconstant and irresolute; easily prevailed on, when the peace it is in quest of is delayed, to desist from further seeking. During the first serious impressions, the light which unveils futurity often shines with too feeble a ray to produce that perfect and plenary conviction which permits the mind no longer to vacillate; and the fascination of sensible objects eclipses the powers of the world to come. Nor is there less to be apprehended from any other quarter. The conscience, roused to a just sense of the danger to which the sinner is exposed by his violation of the laws of God, is apt to derive consolation from this very uneasiness; by which means it is possible that the alarm, which is chiefly valuable on account of its tendency to produce a consent to the overtures of the gospel, may ultimately lull the mind into a deceitful repose. The number, we fear, is not small of those who, though they have never experienced a saving change, are yet under no apprehensions respecting their state, merely because they can remember the time when they felt poignant convictions. Mistaking what are usually the preliminary steps to conversion for conversion itself, they deduce from their former apprehensions an antidote against present fears, and from past prognostics of danger an omen of their future safety.—With persons of this description the flashes of a superficial joy, arising from a presumption of being already pardoned, accompanied with some slight and transient relishes of the word of God, are substituted for that new birth, and that lively trust in the Redeemer, to which the promise of salvation inseparably belongs. Such were those who received the seed into stony ground, and who, having heard the word of God, *anon with joy received it, but having no depth of earth, it soon withered away.* Others endeavor to sooth the anguish of their minds by a punctual performance of certain reli-

gious exercises, and a partial reformation of conduct; in consequence of which they sink into mere formalists; and confounding the instruments of religion with the end, their apparent melioration of character diverts their attention from their real wants, and, by making them insensible of the extent of their malady, obstructs their cure. Instead of imploring the assistance of the great Physician, and implicitly complying with his prescriptions, they have recourse to palliatives, which assuage the anguish and the smart, without reaching the seat or touching the cure of the disorder.

Were the change which the gospel proposes to effect less fundamental and extensive than it is, we might the more easily flatter ourselves with being able to carry its designs into execution. Did it aim merely to polish the exterior, to tame the wildness and prune the luxuriance of nature without the implanting of a new principle, the undertaking would be less arduous. But its scope is much higher; it proposes, not merely to reform, but to renew; not so much to repair the moral edifice as to build it afresh; not merely, by the remonstrances of reason and the dictates of prudence, to engage men to lay a restraint upon their vices, but, by the inspiration of truth, to become new creatures. The effects of the gospel on the heart are compared, by the prophet, to the planting of a wilderness, where what was barrenness and desolation before is replenished with new productions. *I will plant in the wilderness the cedar-tree, the shittah-tree, and the myrtle-tree; I will set in the desert the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box-tree together, that they may know, and consider, and understand that the hand of the Lord hath done this.* Although the change is frequently slow, and the Spirit of God, in effecting it, may proceed by imperceptible steps and gentle insinuations, the issue is invariably the same; nor can any representation do justice to its dignity.—How great the skill requisite in those who are to be the instruments of producing it!

To arrest the attention of the careless, to subdue the pride and soften the obduracy of the human heart, so that it shall stoop to the authority of an unseen Saviour, is a task which surpasses the utmost efforts of human ability, unaided by a superior power. In attempting to realize the design of the Christian ministry, we are proposing to call the attention of men from the things which are seen and temporal to things unseen and eternal; to conduct them from a life of sense to a life of faith; to subdue, or weaken at least, the influence of a world, which, being always present, is incessantly appealing to the senses, and soliciting the heart, in favor of a state whose very existence is ascertained only by testimony. We call upon them to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts, to deny the strongest and most inveterate propensities, and to renounce the enjoyments which they have tasted and felt for the sake of a happiness to which they have no relish. We must charge *them*, as they value their salvation, not to love the world, who have been accustomed to make it the sole object of their attachment, and to return to their allegiance to that almighty and invisible Ruler from whom they have deeply revolted. We present to them, it is true, *a feast of fat things, of wine on the lees well refined;* we invite them to entertainments more ample and exquisite than, but for the gospel, it had entered into the heart of man to conceive: but we address our invitations to minds fatally indisposed, alienated from the life of God, with little sense of the value of his favor, and no delight in his converse. The souls we address, though originally formed for these enjoyments, and utterably incapable of being happy without them, have lost, through the fall, that right taste and apprension of things which is requisite for the due appreciation of these blessings; and, like Ezekiel, we prophesy to dry bones in the valley of Vision, which will never live but under the visitation of that breath which bloweth where it listeth. This indisposition to the things of God, so radical and incurable by human power, as it has been a frequent source of discouragement to the faithful minister, so it would prove an invincible obstacle to success, did that success depend upon human agency.

2. To these difficulties, which arise from the nature of the work, abstractedly considered, must be added those which are modified by a variety of circumstances, and which result from that diversity of temper, character, and situation which prevails in our auditory. To the several classes of which it consists, it is necessary *rightly to divide the word of truth, and give to every one his portion of meat in due season.* The epidemic malady of our nature assumes so many shapes, and appears under such a variety of symptoms, that these may be considered as so many distinct diseases, which demand a proportionate variety in the method of treatment; nor will the same prescription suit all cases. A different set of truths, a different mode of address is requisite to rouse the careless, to beat down the arrogance of a self-justifying spirit from what is necessary to comfort the humble and contrite in heart; nor is it easy to say which we should most anxiously guard against, the infusion of a false peace, or inflaming the wounds which we ought to heal. A loose and indiscriminate manner of applying the promises and threatenings of the gospel is ill-judged and pernicious;

it is not possible to conceive a more effectual method of depriving the sword of the Spirit of its edge, than adopting that lax generality of representation which leaves its hearer nothing to apply, presents no incentive to self-examination, and, besides its utter inefficiency, disgusts by the ignorance of human nature, or the disregard to its best interests, it infallibly betrays. Without descending to such a minute specification of circumstances as shall make our addresses personal, they ought unquestionably to be characteristic, that the conscience of the audience may feel the hand of the preacher searching it, and every individual know where to class himself. The preacher who aims at doing good will endeavor, above all things, to insulate his hearers, to place each of them apart, and render it impossible for him to escape by losing himself in the crowd. At the day of judgment, the attention excited by the surrounding scene, the strange aspect of nature, the dissolution of the elements, and the last trump will have no other effect than to cause the reflections of the sinner to return with a more overwhelming tide on his own character, his sentence, its unchanging destiny; and amid the innumerable millions who surround him, he will *mourn apart*. It is thus the Christian minister should endeavor to prepare the tribunal of conscience, and turn the eyes of every one of his hearers on himself.

To men of different casts and complexions, it is obvious, a corresponding difference in the selection of topics and the method of appeal is requisite. Some are only capable of digesting the first principles of religion, on whom it is necessary often to inculcate the same lessons with the reiteration of parental solicitude: there are others of a wider grasp of apprehension, who must be indulged with an ampler variety, and to whom views of religion less obvious, less obtrusive, and demanding a more vigorous exercise of the understanding, are peculiarly adapted. Some are accustomed to contemplate every subject in a light so cool and argumentative, that they are not easily impressed with any thing which is not presented in the garb of reasoning; nor apt, though firm believers in revelation, to be strongly moved by naked assertions even from that quarter. There are others of a softer temperament who are more easily won by tender strokes of pathos. Minds of an obdurate make, and which have been rendered callous by long habits of vice, must be appalled and subdued by the terrors of the Lord; while others are capable of being *drawn with the cords of love, and with the bands of a man. Some we must save with fear, plucking them out of the fire; on others we must have compassion, making a difference.* You will recollect that he who spake as never man spake, mild, gentle, insinuating in his addresses to the multitude, reserved the thunder of his denunciations for sanctimonious hypocrites. In this part of our ministerial function we shall do well to imitate St. Paul, who became "all things to all men, that he might win some;" combining, in his efforts for the salvation of souls, the utmost simplicity of intention with the utmost versatility of address.

May I be permitted to remark, though it seem a digression, that in the mode of conducting our public ministrations, we are, perhaps, too formal and mechanical; that in the distribution of the matter of our sermons we indulge too little variety, and, exposing our plan in all its parts, abate the edge of curiosity by enabling the hearer to anticipate what we intend to advance.—Why should that force which surprise gives to every emotion derived from just and affecting sentiments be banished from the pulpit, when it is found of such moment in every other kind of public address? I cannot but imagine the first preachers of the gospel appeared before their audience with a more free and unfettered air than is consistent with the narrow trammels to which, in these latter ages, discourses from the pulpit are confined. The sublime emotions with which they were fraught would have rendered them impatient of such restrictions; nor could they suffer the impetuous stream of argument, expostulation, and pathos to be weakened, by diverting it into the artificial reservoirs prepared in the heads and particulars of a modern sermon. Method, we are aware, is an essential ingredient in every discourse designed for the instruction of mankind, but it ought never to force itself on the attention as an object apart; never appear to be an end, instead of an instrument; or beget a suspicion of the sentiments being introduced for the sake of the method, not the method for the sentiments. Let the experiment be tried on some of the best specimens of ancient eloquence; let an oration of Cicero or Demosthenes be stretched upon a Procrustes' bed of this sort, and, if I am not greatly mistaken, the flame and enthusiasm which have excited admiration in all ages will instantly evaporate; yet no one perceives a want of method in these immortal compositions, nor can any thing be conceived more remote from incoherent rhapsody.

To return to the subject: whatever the mode of address, or whatever the choice of topics, there are two qualities inseparable from religious instruction,—these are *seriousness* and *affection*. In the most awful denunciations of the divine displeasure, an air of unaffected tenderness should be preserved, that while with unsparing fidelity

we declare the whole counsel of God, it may appear we are actuated by a genuine spirit of compassion. A hard and unfeeling manner of denouncing the threatenings of the word of God is not only barbarious and inhuman, but calculated, by inspiring disgust, to rob them of all their efficacy. If the awful part of our message, which may be styled the burden of the Lord, ever fall with due weight on our hearers, it will be when it is delivered with a trembling hand and faltering lips; and we may then expect them to realize its solemn import when they perceive that we ourselves are ready to sink under it. "Of whom I have told you before," said St. Paul, "and now tell you *weeping*, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ." What force does that affecting declaration derive from these tears! An affectionate manner insinuates itself into the heart, renders it soft and pliable, and disposes it to imbibe the sentiments and follow the impulse of the speaker. Whoever has attended to the effect of addresses from the pulpit must have perceived how much of their impression depends upon this quality, which gives to sentiments comparatively trite a power over the mind beyond what the most striking and original conceptions possess without it.

Near akin to this, and not inferior in importance, is the second quality we mentioned, *seriousness*. It is scarcely necessary to remark, how offensive and unnatural is every violation of it in a religious discourse, which is, however, of wider extent than is generally imagined, including not merely jesting, buffoonery, and undisguised levity of every sort, but also whatsoever, in composition or manner, is inconsistent with the supposition of the speaker being deeply in earnest; such as sparkling ornaments, farfetched images, and that exuberance of flowers which seems evidently designed to gratify the fancy rather than to touch the heart. When St. Paul recommends to Timothy that *sound speech which cannot be condemned*, it is probable he refers as much to the propriety of the vehicle as to the purity of the instruction. There is, permit me to remind you, a sober dignity both of language and of sentiment suited to the representations of religion in all its variety of topics, from which the inspired writers never depart, and which it will be our wisdom to imitate. In describing the pleasures of devotion, or the joys of heaven, there is nothing weak, sickly, or effeminate: a chaste severity pervades their delineations, and whatever they say appears to emanate from a serious mind, accustomed to the contemplation of great objects without ever sinking under them from imbecility, or attempting to supply a deficiency of interest by puerile exaggerations and feeble ornaments. The exquisite propriety of their representations is chiefly to be ascribed to their habitual seriousness; and the latter to seeing things as they are.

3. Having touched on the principal difficulties attending the *public* exercise of the ministry, it may be expected something will be said on its more private functions. To affirm it to be the duty of a pastor to visit his people often is, perhaps, affirming too much; the more frequently he converses with them, however, provided his conversation be properly conducted, the more will his person be endeared and his ministry acceptable. The seasonable introduction of religious topics is often of such admirable use, that there are few qualities more enviable than the talent of "teaching from house to house;" though the modern state of manners, I am aware, has rendered this branch of the pastoral office much more difficult than in former times. In a country village where there is more simplicity, less dissipation, and less hurry of business than in large towns, prudent exertions of this kind may be considered as eminently proper and beneficial. The extent to which they should be carried must be determined by circumstances, without attempting to prescribe any other rule than this, that the conversation of a Christian minister should be always such as is adapted to strengthen, not impair, the impression of his public instructions. Though it is not necessary nor expedient for him to be always conversing on the subject of religion, his conversation should invariably have a religious tendency; that whatever excursions he indulges, the return to serious topics may be easy and natural. The whole cast of his character should be such as is adapted to give weight to the exercise of his ministerial functions. On the peculiar force with which the obligations of virtue attach to a Christian teacher, the purity and correctness of your own conduct, while it would embolden me to speak with the greater freedom, make it less necessary for me to insist. You are aware that moral delinquency in him produces a sensation as when an armor-bearer fainteth; that he can neither stand nor fall by himself; and that it is impossible for him to deviate essentially from the path of rectitude without incurring the guilt and infamy of Jeroboam, who is never mentioned but to be stigmatised as he *who taught Israel to sin*. "Be thou an ensample to the flock in faith, in purity, in conversation, in doctrine, in charity." Instead of satisfying ourselves in the acquisition of virtue with the attainments of a learner, we must aspire to the perfection of a master, and give to our conduct the correctness of a pattern. We are called to such a conquest over the world, and such an exhibition of the spirit of Christ, as shall not merely exempt us from censure,

but excite to emulation. "Ye are the salt of the earth, ye are the light of the world," said our Saviour to his disciples, whom he was about to send forth in the character of public teachers. As persons to whom the conduct of souls is committed, we cannot make a wrong step without endangering the interests of others; so that if we neglect to take our soundings and inspect our chart, ours is the misconduct of the pilot, who is denied the privilege of perishing alone. The immoral conduct of a Christian minister is little less than a public triumph over the religion he inculcates; and when we recollect the frailty of our nature, the snares to which we are exposed, and the wiles of our adversary, who will proportion his efforts to the advantages resulting from his success, we must be aware how much the necessity of maintaining an exemplary conduct adds to the difficulty of the ministerial function.

With the utmost propriety of conduct, and the greatest skill exerted in your work we dare not flatter you with the prospect of unmingled success. Under the most judicious method of treatment, the maladies of some will prove incurable, and they will perish under your hand. While to some the gospel is a "savour of life unto life," to others it will prove "the savour of death unto death;" and in the course of your labors you will meet with frequent disappointments where you have formed the most sanguine expectations. "Some who did run well will afterward be hindered; and of others, who have clean escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, being afterward entangled therein, the latter end will be worse than the beginning." Many a Demas, it is probable, will forsake you, having loved this present world; and by many of your hearers, who now evince the most zealous attachment, you may hereafter be considered as an enemy, because you tell them the truth. In certain instances, your ministry will be attended with consequences which you cannot contemplate without deep concern; for the sword of the spirit is an awful weapon, which will exert, where it fails to inflict a salutary wound, its destructive edge. Against those of your hearers who reject your message, though now an ambassador of peace, and often a weeping suppliant at their feet, you will ere long appear a swift witness before God, and be compelled by your voice, to exasperate the accents of vengeance, and augment the vials of wrath. "You are set for the rising and falling of many in Israel."

II. But it is time to turn to a more pleasing part of our subject, and to remind you of some of the supports by which these sources of discouragement are balanced.

1. The office you have undertaken is of divine institution. The unhappy disputes which have prevailed in the church respecting the proper channels for conveying, and the legitimate mode of vesting it, are so far from weakening or perplexing the evidence of this truth, that they may be considered as so many concurrent suffrages in its favor; since it is allowed on all hands that the Christian ministry is an ordinance of God; an expedient for the improvement of mankind, of his devising, and supported by his authority. But of that wisdom which pervades the works of God, the church is the principal scene; *to the intent*, saith the apostle, *that to principalities and powers might be made known by the church the manifold wisdom of God.* Hence we may be certain that so leading a branch of its constitution as that under our consideration cannot fail of being adapted in the best possible manner to promote the interest of religion; nor is it difficult to perceive, that if men are to be wrought upon by reason and persuasion, the setting apart an order for the express purpose of instructing them in the concerns of salvation must have a beneficial tendency; an order, be it remembered, not appointed like the priests of pagan antiquity for the performance of ceremonies, but for the inculcation of truth; not to conduct the pomp of lustrations and sacrifices, but to "watch for souls as those that must give an account." Nothing similar to this was known in the heathen religions; it is peculiar to Christianity, and evincing the simple wisdom of its author, is as original in its conception as it is admirable in its effects. Its simplicity, its distance from whatever is dazzling in the eyes of mankind, is one of its highest recommendations; for the Christian minister is beautifully compared to a fisherman, who would only be embarrassed by those instruments and appendages which belong to more splendid but less useful employments.

2. Another consideration calculated to afford us encouragement is, that the materials of our work are ready furnished to our hand, and, at the same time, of a nature admirably adapted to our purpose. Our office is that of stewards of the mysteries of the kingdom; our duty, faithfully to dispense the stores which superior wisdom and opulence have provided. It is not necessary for us to stretch our invention in the discovery of topics and arguments fitted to move the mind and impel it in a right direction, which, if we may judge from past experience, would be a most unpromising undertaking. A doctrine, full, pure, perfect, to which nothing can be added without debasing its spirit, nothing taken away without impairing its proportions, is committed to our trust to be retained and preserved just as we

have received it, and delivered to our hearers in all its primitive simplicity. Like the works of nature, while it exhibits at first view an impress of its author, in the unequivocal character it bears of purity and majesty, it improves on a closer examination; and the more deeply it is investigated the more the wisdom of the contrivance, in its exquisite adaptation to the state and condition of mankind, becomes conspicuous. As the discovery of a way of salvation for a fallen race, of the method by which a guilty and degenerate creature may recover the image and favor of his Maker, which we must ever remember is its most essential characteristic, what is wanting to its perfection? what information or assurance beyond what it contains, calculated to awe, enlighten, convince, and encourage? The facts it exhibits, supported by clear and indubitable testimony, are more extraordinary than ever entered the mind of man in its widest excursions, combining all the sobriety of truth with more than the grandeur of fiction; and the doctrines connected with these facts, by the easiest and most natural inference, are of infinite moment. To a serious mind, the truths of the Christian religion appear with such an air of unaffected greatness, that in comparison of these all other speculations and reasonings seem like the amusements of childhood. When the Deity, the incarnation, the atonement, the resurrection of the Son of God, the sanctification of the church, and the prospects of glory have engaged our contemplation, we feel, in turning our attention to other objects a strange descent, and perceive with the certainty of demonstration, that as the earth is too narrow for the full development of these mysteries, they are destined by their consequences and effects to impregnate an eternal duration. We are not at all surprised at finding the ancient prophets searched into these mysteries with great but unsuccessful diligence, that the angels desire to look into them, or that the apostles were lost in the contemplation of those riches which they proclaimed and imparted. Are you desirous of fixing the attention of your hearers strongly on their everlasting concerns? No peculiar refinement of thought, no subtlety of reasoning, much less the pompous exaggerations of secular eloquence are wanted for that purpose; you have only to imbibe deeply the mind of Christ, to let his doctrine enlighten, his love inspire your heart, and your situation, in comparison of other speakers, will resemble that of the angel of the Apocalypse, who was seen standing in the sun. Draw your instructions from the Bible; the more they are derived from that source, and the less they are tinctured with human distinctions and refinements, the more salutary and the more efficacious will they be. Let them be fresh from the spring. You, I ampersuaded, will not satisfy yourself with the study of Christianity in narrow, jejune abrigments and systems, but contemplate it in its utmost extent, as it subsists in the sacred oracles; and in investigating these you will permit your reason and conscience an operation as free and unfettered as if none had examined them before. The neglect of this produces, too often, an artificial scarcity, where some of the choicest provisions of the household are exploded or overlooked.

When we inculcate, with so much earnestness, an attention to the mind of Christ as exhibited in the Scriptures, let us not be understood to exclude his precepts, or to countenance, for a moment, the too frequent neglect of Christian morality. While you delight in displaying the riches of divine grace, conspicuous in the work of redemption, as the grand motive to love and trust in the Redeemer, you will not forget frequently to admonish your hearers that he only "loveth him who keepeth his sayings;" the illustration of which, in their bearings upon the different relations and circumstances of life, will form, if you follow the apostolic example, a most important branch of your ministry. Not content with committing the obligation of morality to the arbitration of feeling, much less with faintly hinting at it, as an obvious inference from orthodox doctrine, you will illustrate its principles with an energy, a copiousness, a fulness of detail proportioned to its acknowledged importance. You will not be silent on the precepts, from an apprehension of infringing on the freedom of the gospel, nor sink the character of the legislator in that of the Saviour of the church. A morality, more elevated and pure than is to be met with in the pages of Seneca or Epictetus, will breathe through your sermons, founded on a basis which every understanding can comprehend, and enforced by sanctions which nothing but the utmost stupidity can despise; a morality of which the love of God and a devoted attachment to the Redeemer are the plastic soul, which, pervading every limb and expressing itself in every lineament of the new creature, gives it a beauty all its own. As it is the genuine fruit of just and affecting views of divine truth, you will never sever it from its parent stock, nor indulge the fruitless hope of leading men to holiness, without strongly imbueing them with the spirit of the gospel. Truth and holiness are in the Christian system so intimately allied, that the warm and faithful inculcation of the one lays the only foundation for the other. For the illustration of particular branches of morals, we may consult pagan writers on ethics with advantage; but in search of principles,

it is at our peril that we desert the school of Christ; since "we are complete in Him," and all the moral excellence to which we can aspire is but Christianity imbodied; or, if we may be allowed to change the figure, the impress of the gospel upon the heart. The perfection of the Christian system, considered as the instrument of renovating the human mind, is the second consideration.

3. The third consideration to which I would direct your attention is that of its being the dispensation of the Spirit. To this the apostle immediately refers in the context, where he is contrasting the Christian with the Jewish institute. "Who hath also made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death written and engraven in stones was glorious, how shall not the ministration of the spirit be more glorious?" From this circumstance he infers superior dignity of the Christian ministry. The miraculous gifts intended for a sign to unbelievers, and to aid the gospel during its first struggle with the powers of pagan darkness, have long since ceased with the exigency that called them forth; but the renewing and sanctifying agency of the spirit remains, and will continue till the end of time; the express declaration of the Saviour not admitting a doubt of its perpetuity. "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, the spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him, but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." To the world, who, in their unrenewed state, are unsusceptible of his sanctifying impress, he is promised in a preparatory form of a spirit of conviction; to believers, he is promised as an indwelling principle, an ever-present Deity, who consecrates the hearts of the faithful to be his perpetual abode. Hence the ministers of Christ are not dependent for success on the force of moral suasion; not merely the teachers of an external religion, including truths the most momentus, and duties of the highest obligation; they are also the instruments through whom a supernatural agency is exerted. And hence in the conversion of souls, we are not to compare the difficulties to be surmounted with the feeble resources of human power, but with His with whom nothing is impossible. To this the inspired historian every where directs our attention as alone sufficient to account for the signal success which crowned the labors of the first preachers. If a great multitude at Antioch turned to the Lord, it was because the hand of the Lord was with them; if Lydia believed, in consequence of giving attention to the things that were spoken, it was because the Lord opened her heart; if Paul planted and Apollos watered with success, it was the Lord who gave the increase; and highly as they were endowed, and though invested with such extensive authority, they did not presume to count upon any thing from themselves; their sufficiency was of God. As the possibility of such an influence can be doubted by none who believe in a Deity, so the peculiar consolation derived from the doctrine that asserts it seems to be this, that it renders what was merely possible certain, what before was vague and undetermined fixed, by reducing the interposition of the Almighty, in the concern of salvations, to a stated method and a settled law. The communication of the spirit, to render the gospel efficacious, becomes a standing ordinance of Heaven, and a full security for its final triumph over every opposing force.—*My word*, said the Lord by the prophet, *shall not return unto me void, but shall accomplish the thing whereunto I sent it.* At the same time, connected as it is by the very tenor of the promise with the publication of an external revelation, and professing to set its seal only to the testimony of Jesus, it precludes, as far as possible, every enthusiastic pretension, by leaving the appeal to Scripture as full and uncontrolled as if no such agency were supposed. It is strange that any should be found to deny a doctrine so consolatory under the pretence of its derogating from the sufficiency of revelation, when it not only ascribes to it all the efficacy that can belong to an instrument or external means, but confers the highest honor upon it, by marking it out as the only fountain of instruction to which the agency of the Deity is inseparably attached. The idea of his immediate interposition must necessarily increase our veneration for whatever is connected with it; and let it ever be remembered, that the internal illumination of the spirit is merely intended to qualify the mind for distinctly perceiving and cordially embracing those objects and no other, which are exhibited in the written word. To dispel prejudice, to excite a disposition for inquiry, and to infuse that love of the truth without which we can neither be transformed by its power nor bow to its dictates, is the grand scope of spiritual agency; and how this should derogate from the dignity of the truth itself, it is not easy to conceive. The inseparable alliance between the spirit and the word secures the harmony of the Divine dispensations; and since that spirit of truth can never contradict himself, whatever impulse he may give, whatever disposition he may communicate, it involves no irreverence towards that divine agent to compare his operations with that standing revelation which,

equally claiming him for its author, he has expressly appointed for the trial of the spirits.

Let me earnestly entreat you, by keeping close to the fountain of grace, to secure a large measure of its influence. In your private studies and in your public performances, remember your absolute dependence on superior aid; let your conviction of this dependence become so deep and practical as to prevent your attempting any thing in your own strength, after the example of St. Paul, who, when he had occasion to advert to his labors in the gospel, checks himself by adding, with ineffable modesty, *yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.* From that vivid perception of truth, that full assurance of faith which is its inseparable attendant, you will derive unspeakable advantage in addressing your hearers; a seriousness, tenderness, and majesty will pervade your discourses, beyond what the greatest unassisted talent can command.—In the choice of your subjects it will lead you to what is most solid and useful, while it enables you to handle them in a manner the most efficacious and impressive. Possessed of this celestial unction, you will not be under the temptation of neglecting a plain gospel in quest of amusing speculations or unprofitable novelties; the most ordinary topics will open themselves with a freshness and interest, as though you had never considered them before; and *the things of the Spirit* will display their enexhaustible variety and depth. You will pierce the invisible world; you will look, so to speak, into eternity, and present the essence and core of religion, while too many preachers, for want of spiritual discernment, rest satisfied with the surface and the shell. It will not allow us to throw one grain of incense on the alter of vanity; it will make us forget ourselves so completely as to convince our hearers we do so; and, displacing every thing else from the attention, leave nothing to be felt or thought of but the majesty of truth and the realities of eternity.

In proportion to the degree in which you possess this sacred influence will be the earnestness with which you implore it in behalf of your hearers. Often will you bow the knee to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he will grant unto them the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; the eyes of their understanding being enlightened, that they may know what is the hope of their calling, and what are the riches of the glory of his inheritance among them that believe.

On the one hand it deserves attention, that the most eminent and successful preachers of the gospel in different communities, a Brainerd, a Baxter, and a Schwartz, have been the most conspicuous for a simple dependence upon spiritual aid; and on the other, that no success whatever has attended the ministrations of those by whom this doctrine has been either neglected or denied. They have met with such a rebuke of their presumption, in the total failure of their efforts, that none will contend for the reality of divine interposition as far as *they* are concerned; for when has "the arm of the Lord been revealed" to those pretended teachers of Christianity who believe there is no such arm? We must leave them to labor in a field respecting which God has commanded the clouds not to rain upon it. As if conscious of this, of late they have turned their efforts into a new channel, and, despairing of the conversion of sinners, have confined themselves to the seduction of the faithful; in which, it must be confessed, they have acted in a manner perfectly consistent with their principles; the propagation of heresy requiring, at least, no *divine* assistance.

4. Let me request you to consider the dignity and importance of the profession which you have assumed. I am aware that the bare mention of these, as attributes of the Christian ministry (especially when exercised among Protestant dissenters,) may provoke a smile: we contend however, that if the dignity of an employment is to be estimated, not by the glitter of external appearances, but by the magnitude and duration of the consequences involved in its success, the ministerial function is an high and honorable one. Though it is not permitted us to magnify ourselves, we may be allowed to magnify our office; and, indeed, the juster the apprehensions we entertain of what belongs to it, the deeper the conviction we shall feel of our defects. Independently of every other consideration, that office cannot be mean which the Son of God condescended to sustain; for *the word which we preach first began to be spoken by the Lord;* and, while he sojourned upon earth, that Prince of life was chiefly employed in publishing his own religion. That office cannot be mean whose end is the recovery of man to his original purity and happiness—the illumination of the understanding—the communication of truth—and the production of principles which will bring forth fruit unto everlasting life. As the material part of the creation was formed for the sake of the immaterial; and of the latter the most momentous characteristic is its moral and accountable nature, or, in other words, its capacity of virtue and vice; that labor cannot want dignity which is exerted in improving man in his highest character, and fitting him for his eternal destination. Here alone is certainty and durability; for, however highly we may esteem the arts and sciences which polish our spe-

cies and promote the welfare of society; whatever reverence we may feel, and ought to feel, for those laws and institutions whence it derives the security necessary for enabling it to enlarge its resources and develop its energies, we cannot forget that these are but the embellishments of a scene we must shortly quit—the decorations of a theatre, from which the eager spectators and applauded actors must soon retire. *The end of all things is at hand.* Vanity is inscribed on every earthly pursuit, on all sublunary labor; its materials, its instruments, and its objects will alike perish. An incurable taint of mortality has seized upon, and will consume them ere long. The acquisitions derived from religion, the graces of a renovated mind, are alone permanent. This is the mystic enclosure, rescued from the empire of change and death; this is the field which the Lord has blessed: and this word of the kingdom, the seed which alone produces immortal fruit, the very bread of life, with which, under a higher economy, the Lamb in the midst of the throne will feed his flock and replenish his elect through eternal ages. How high and awful a function is that which proposes to establish in the soul an interior dominion—to illuminate its powers by a celestial light—and introduce it to an intimate, ineffable, and unchanging alliance with the Father of Spirits! What an honor to be employed as the instrument of conducting that mysterious process by which men are born of God; to expel from the heart the venom of the old serpent; to purge the conscience from invisible stains of guilt; to release the passions from the bondage of corruption and invite them to soar aloft into the regions of uncreated light and beauty; *to say to the prisoners, Go forth, to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves!*—These are the fruits which arise from the successful discharge of the Christian ministry; these the effects of the gospel wherever it becomes the power of God unto salvation: and the interests which they create, the joy which they diffuse, are felt in other worlds.

In insisting on the dignity attached to the ministerial office, it is far from my intention to supply fuel to vanity, or suggest such ideas of yourself as shall tempt you to "lord it over God's heritage." Let the importance of your station be rather felt and acknowledged in its beneficial results than ostentatiously displayed; and the consciousness of it, instead of being suffered to evaporate in authoritative airs and pompous pretentions, produce a concentration of your powers. If the great apostle was content to be a helper of the joy without claiming dominion over the faith of his converts, how far should we be from advancing such a claim! If he served the Lord with humility and many tears; if he appeared among the churches which he planted, "in fear and in weakness, and with much trembling," we may learn how possible it is to combine with true dignity the most unassuming deportment and the deepest conviction of our weakness and unworthiness with a vigorous discharge of whatever belongs to the apostolic, much more to the pastoral office. The proper use to be made of such considerations as have now been suggested is, to *stir up the gift which is in us*, to apply ourselves to our work with becoming resolution, and anticipate, in dependence on the divine blessing, important effects. The moment we permit ourselves to think lightly of the Christian ministry, our right arm is withered; nothing but imbecility and relaxation remains. For no man ever excelled in a profession to which he did not feel an attachment bordering on enthusiasm; though what in other professions is enthusiasm, is in ours the dictate of sobriety and truth.

5. Recollect, for your encouragement, the reward that awaits the faithful minister. Such is the mysterious condescension of divine grace, that although it reserves to itself the exclusive honor of being the fountain of all, yet, by the employment of human agency in the completion of its designs, it contrives to multiply its gifts, and to lay a foundation for eternal rewards. When the church, in the perfection of beauty, shall be presented to Christ as a bride adorned for her husband, the faithful pastor will appear as the friend of the bridegroom, who *greatly rejoices because of the bridegroom's voice.* His joy will be the joy of his Lord, inferior in degree, but of the same nature, and arising from the same sources: while he will have the peculiar happiness of reflecting that he has contributed to it; contributed, as an humble instrument, to that glory and felicity of which he will be conscious he is utterly unworthy to partake. To have been himself the object of mercy, to have been the means of imparting it to others, and of dispensing the unsearchable riches of Christ, will produce a pleasure which can never be adequately felt or understood until we see him as he is. From that oneness of spirit, from that inseparable conjunction of interest, which will then be experienced in its utmost extent, will arise a capacity of sharing the triumph of the Redeemer and of participating in the delight with which he will survey his finished work, when a new and fairer creation shall arise out of the ruins of the first. And is this the end, he will exclaim, of all my labors, my toils, and watchings, my expostulations with sinners, and my efforts to console the faithful! and is this the issue of that

ministry under which I was often ready to sink! and this the glory of which I heard so much, understood so little, and announced to my hearers with lisping accents and a stammering tongue! well might it be styled the glory *to be revealed.* Auspicious day! on which I embarked in this undertaking, on which the love of Christ, with a sweet and sacred violence, impelled me to feed his sheep and to feed his lambs. With what emotion shall we, who, being intrusted with so holy a ministry, shall find mercy to be faithful, hear that voice from heaven, Rejoice and be glad, and give honor to him! for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready! With what rapture shall we recognise, amid an innumerable multitude, the seals of our ministry, the persons whom we have been the means of conducting to that glory!

Hence we discern the futility of the objection against the doctrine of future rewards, drawn from an apprehension that to be actuated by such a motive argues a mean and mercenary disposition; since the reward to which we aspire, in this instance at least, grows out of the employment in which we are engaged, and will consist in enjoyments which can only be felt and perceived by a refined and elevated spirit.—The success of our undertaking will, in reality, reward itself, by the complete gratification it will afford to the sentiments of devotion and benevolence which, in their highest perfection, form the principal ingredient in future felicity. To have co-operated in any degree towards the accomplishment of that purpose of the Deity to reconcile all things to himself by reducing them to the obedience of his Son, which is the ultimate end of all his works,—to be the means of recovering, though it were but an inconsiderable portion of a lapsed and degenerate race, to eternal happiness, will yield a satisfaction exactly commensurate to the force of our benevolent sentiments, and the degree of our loyal attachment to the supreme Potentate. The consequences involved in saving a soul from death, and hiding a multitude of sins, will be duly appreciated in that world where the worth of souls and the malignity of sin are fully understood; while, to extend the triumphs of the Redeemer, by forming him in the hearts of men, will produce a transport which can only be equalled by the gratitude and love we shall feel towards the Source of all our good.

Before I close this discourse, which has, perhaps, already detained you too long, let me suggest one reflection which so naturally arises from the view we have taken of the ministerial office that I cannot think it right to pass it over in silence. The consideration to which we allude respects the advantages possessed by the Christian minister for the cultivation of personal piety. Blessed is the man, said the royal Psalmist, whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee; blessed are they who dwell in thy house, they will be still praising thee. If he was so strongly impressed with a conviction of the high privilege annexed to the priesthood, by virtue of its being allowed a nearer approach to God in the services of the sanctuary, the situation of a Christian minister is not less distinguished, nor less desirable. It is the only one in which our general calling as Christians, and our particular calling as men, perfectly coincide. In a life occupied in actions that terminate in the present moment, and in cares and pursuits extremely disproportionate to the dignity of our nature, but rendered necessary by the imperfection of our state; it is but little of their time that the greater part of mankind can devote to the direct and immediate pursuit of their eternal interests. A few remnants, snatched from the business of life, are all that most can bestow. In our profession, the full force and vigor of the mind may be exerted on that which will employ it for ever,—on *religion*, the final centre of repose; the goal to which all things tend, which gives to time all its importance, to eternity all its glory; apart from which man is a shadow, his very existence a riddle, and the stupendous scenes which surround him as incoherent and unmeaning as the leaves which the sybil scattered in the wind. Our inaptitude to be affected in any measure proportioned to the intrinsic value of the interest in which we are concerned, and the objects with which we are conversant, is partly to be ascribed to the corruption of nature, partly to the limitation of our faculties. As far as this disproportion is capable of being corrected, the pursuits connected with our office are unquestionably best adapted to that purpose, by closely fixing the attention on objects which can never be contemned but in consequence of being forgotten, nor ever surveyed with attention without filling the whole sphere of vision. Though the scene of our labor is on earth, the things to which it relates subsist in eternity. We can give no account of our office, much less discharge any branch of it with propriety and effect, without adverting to a future state of being; while in a happy exemption from the tumultuous cares of life, our only concern with mankind, as far as it respects our official character, is to promote their everlasting welfare; our only business on earth, the very same that employs those exalted spirits who are sent forth on embassies of mercy, *to minister to them who shall be the heirs of salvation.* Our duties and pursuits are distinguished from all others

by their immediate relation to the ultimate end of human existence; so that, while secular employments can be rendered innocent only by an extreme care to avoid the pollutions which they are so liable to contract, the ministerial functions bear an indelible impress of sanctity. The purposes accomplished by the ministry of the gospel, in the restoration of a fallen creature to the image of his Maker, are not among the *things which were made for man;* they are the *things for which man was made;* since, without regard to time or place, they are essential to his perfection and happiness. How much of heaven is naturally connected with an office whose sole purpose is to conduct man thither! and what a superiority to the love of the world may be expected from men who are appointed to publish that dispensation which reveals its danger, detects its vanity, rebukes its disorders, and foretels its destruction!

He must know little of the world, and still less of his own heart, who is not aware how difficult it is, amid the corrupting examples with which it abounds, to maintain the spirit of devotion unimpaired, or to preserve, in their due force and delicacy, those vivid moral impressions, that quick perception of good, and instinctive abhorrence of evil, which form the chief characteristic of a pure and elevated mind. These, like the morning dew, are easily brushed off in the collisions of worldly interest, or exhaled by the meridian sun. Hence the necessity of frequent intervals of retirement, when the mind may recover its scattered powers, and renew its strength by a devout application to the Fountain of all grace.

To the ordinary occupations of life we are rather indebted for the trial of our virtue than for the matter, or the motive; and, however criminal it would be to neglect them, in our present state, they can only be reduced under the dominion of religion by a general intention of pleasing God.—But in carrying into effect the designs of the gospel we are communicating that pure element of good which, like the solar light, pervades every part of the universe, and forms, there is every reason to believe, the most essential ingredient in the felicity of all created beings.

If, in the actual commerce of the world, the noblest principles are often sacrificed to mean expedients, and the rules of moral rectitude made to bend to the indulgence of vain and criminal passions, how happy for us that we are under the necessity of contemplating them in their abstract grandeur, of viewing them as an emanation of the divine beauty; as the immutable law of the creation, imbodied in the character of the Saviour, and illustrated in the elevated sentiments, the holy lives, and triumphant deaths of prophets, saints, and martyrs! *We* are called, every moment, to ascend to first principles, *to stand in the council of God*, and to imbibe the dictates of celestial wisdom in their *first* communication, before they become debased and contaminated by a mixture with grosser elements.

The bane of human happiness is ordinarily not so much an absolute ignorance of what is best, as an inattention to it, accompanied with a habit of not adverting to prospects the most certain, and the most awful. But how can we be supposed to contract this inadvertence, who are incessantly engaged in placing truth in every possible light, tracing it in its utmost extent, and exhibiting it in all its evidence! Can we be supposed to forget *that day and that hour, of which no man knoweth*, who are stationed as watchmen to give the alarm, to announce the first symptoms of danger, and to cry in the ears of a sleeping world, *Behold, the bridegroom cometh:* or, however inattentive others may be to the approach of our Lord, can it ever vanish from our minds, who are detained by him in his sanctuary on purpose to preserve it pure, to trim the golden lamps, and maintain the hallowed fire, that he may find nothing neglected, or in disorder, when he shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant whom we delight in?

Men are ruined in their eternal interests by failing to look within; by being so absorbed in the pursuit of earthly good as to neglect the state of their hearts. But can this be supposed to be the case with us, who must never hope to discharge our office with effect without an intimate acquaintance with the inward man—without tracing the secret operations of nature and of grace—without closely inspecting the causes of revival, and of decay, in the spiritual life, and detecting the most secret springs and plausible artifices of temptation; in all which we shall be successful just in proportion to the degree of devout attention we bestow on the movements of our own minds.

Men are ruined in their eternal interests by living as though they were their own, and neglecting to realize the certainty of a future account. But it must surely require no small effort to divert our attention from this truth, who have not only the same interest in it with others, but, in consequence of the care of souls, possess a responsibility of a distinct and awful character; since not one of those to whom that care extends can fall short of salvation through our neglect or default, but *his blood will be required at our hands.* Where, in short, can we turn our eyes without meeting with incentives to piety. What part of the sacred function can we touch which will not remind us of the beauty of holiness, the evil of sin, and

the emptiness of all sublunary good; or, where shall we not find ourselves in a temple resounding with awful voices, and filled with holy inspirations?

I feel a pleasing conviction, that, in consequence of deriving from your ministry that spiritual aid it is so adapted to impart, both your piety and usefulness will continue to increase, and by being intimately incorporated, aid and strengthen each other; so that your profiting shall appear unto all men, and while you are watering others, you yourself shall be abundantly watered of God. Thus will you be enabled to adopt the language of the beloved apostle, That which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life, declare we unto you. Thus will you possess that unction from which your hearers cannot fail, under the divine blessing, to reap the highest benefit; for while we are exploring the mines of revelation for the purpose of exhibiting to mankind the *unsearchable riches of Christ*, we are not in the situation of those unhappy men who merely toil for the advantage of others, and dare not appropriate to themselves an atom of that precious ore on which their labor is employed: we are permitted and invited first to enrich ourselves, and the more we appropriate the more shall we impart. It is my earnest prayer, my dear brother, *that you may feed the Church of the Lord which he has purchased with his own blood; that you may make full proof of your ministry; be instant in season and out of season; teach, exhort, and rebuke, with all long-suffering and authority.* Then, should you be spared to your flock, you will witness the fruit of your labors in a spiritual plantation, growing under your hand, adorned with *trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified;* and while, neglecting worldly considerations, you are intent on the high ends of your calling, inferior satisfactions will not be wanting, but you will meet among the seals of your ministry with fathers and mothers, sisters and brothers. Or should your career be prematurely cut short, you will have lived long enough to answer the purposes of your being, and to leave a record in the consciences of your hearers, which will not suffer you soon to be forgotten. Though dead, you will still speak; you will speak from the tomb; it may be, in accents more powerful and persuasive than your living voice could command.

END.

AN

ADDRESS

TO

THE REV. EUSTACE CAREY,

JANUARY 19, 1814.

ON HIS DESIGNATION AS A CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY TO INDIA.

BY ROBERT HALL, A. M.

As it has been usual in the designation of a missionary, after solemnly commending him to God by prayer, to deliver a short address; in compliance with a custom not perhaps improper or illaudable, I shall request your attention to a few hints of advice, without attempting a regular charge, which I neither judge myself equal to nor deem necessary, since on your arrival in India you will receive from your venerable relative Dr. Carey instruction more ample and appropriate than it is in my power to communicate.

When the first missionaries who visited these western parts were sent out, their designation was accompanied with prayer and fasting; whence we may infer that fervent supplication ought to form the distinguishing feature in the exercises appropriated to these occasions.

An effusion of the spirit of prayer on the church of Christ is a surer pledge of success in the establishment of missions than the most splendid exhibitions of talent. As there is no engagement more immediately dependent on God, than that on which you are entering; to none is that spiritual aid more indispensably necessary which is chiefly awarded to the prayers of the faithful.

"Separate to me," said the Holy Ghost to the disciples assembled at Antioch, "separate to me Barnabas and Saul, to the work whereunto I have called them." When the omniscient Searcher of hearts separates a Christian minister from his brethren and assigns him a distinct work, it implies the previous perception of certain qualifications for its successful discharge not generally possessed; for though none can give the increase but God, much of his wisdom is to be traced in the selection of instruments fitted to his purpose. The first and most essential qualification for a missionary is a decided predilection for the office; not the effect of sudden impulse, but of serious, deep consideration; a predilection strengthened and matured by deliberately counting the cost. Every man has his proper calling; and while the greater part of Christian teachers are perfectly satisfied with attempting to do all the good in their power in their native land, there are others of a more enterprising character, inflamed with the holy ambition of carrying the glad tidings beyond the bounds of Christendom; like the great apostle of the Gentiles, who was determined not to build on another man's foundation, but if possible to preach Christ in regions where his name was not known. The circumstances which contribute to such a resolution are various, often too subtle and complicated to admit of a distinct analysis: a constitutional ardor of mind, a natural neglect of difficulties and dangers, an impatience of being confined within the trammels of ordinary duties, together with many accidental associations and impressions, may combine to form a missionary spirit; nor is it so necessary minutely to investigate the causes which have led to a given determination, as the legitimacy of the object and the purity of the motive.

We adore the prolific Source of all good, in the variety and discriminations in his gifts, by which he imparts a separate character and allots a distinct sphere of operation to the general and essential principles which form the Christian and the minister. "He gave some apostles and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

The sacred impulse to which we have adverted I am certain you have felt in no common degree, and that it has been your ardent wish to be employed as a messenger to the heathen from the time you devoted yourself to the ministry. Of your possess-

ing this most essential pre-requisite for the office you have undertaken it is impossible for those who know you to entertain a doubt.

The next qualification of whose necessity I must be allowed to remind you is singular self-devotement, without a degree of which it is not possible to be a Christian, still less to any useful purpose a minister, least of all a missionary. In resolving to quit your native country, and to relinquish your nearest connexions, with little expectation of beholding them again in the flesh, you have given decisive indications of this spirit; nor to a mind like yours, exquisitely alive to the sensibilities of nature and friendship, can the sacrifice you have already made be deemed inconsiderable. But as it is still impossible for you to conjecture the extent of the privations and trials to which, in the pursuit of your object, you may be exposed, your situation is not unlike that of Abraham, who being commanded to leave his own country and his father's house, went out not knowing whither he went. As you are entering on an untried scene, where difficulties may arise to exercise your patience and fortitude of which you can form but a very inadequate conception, you will do well to contemplate the example and meditate the words of St. Paul in circumstances not very dissimilar:—"And now I go up bound in spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing what shall befall me there, save that in every city the Holy Ghost witnesseth that bonds and affliction await me: but none of these things move me; neither count I my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my course with joy, and the ministry I have received of the Lord to fulfil it." The love of ease or the indulgence of secular ambition would be fatal to the object you are pursuing; nor in your situation is there any thing so much to be dreaded as a divided heart, a spirit which hesitates between the calls of duty and the attractions of the world. "To arm yourself with the same mind that was in Christ, who himself suffered, leaving us an example that we should walk in his steps," is a most indispensable part of your duty. In proportion as you feel yourself a stranger upon the earth, eagerly attached to none of its enjoyments or pursuits, prepared without repining to relinquish whatever Providence may demand, and suffer whatever it may inflict; in a word in proportion to the degree in which you abandon all right to yourself, will you be qualified for the work of an evangelist. Purged from earthly concretions and worldly passions, you will become a "vessel of honor fitted for the Master's use." He who is not possessed of a considerable portion of a self-denying spirit which was eminently the spirit of Him "who pleased not himself," can engage in no employment more irksome and intolerable than that of a missionary; for what pleasure can he expect, what advantage can he hope to reap, independent of the consciousness or the hope of doing good? By the nature of your undertaking, all the avenues to secular reputation and emolument are shut against you; on the brilliant illusions with which the children of this world are enchanted you have closed your eyes, and nothing is left but the severe and sublime satisfaction of following in the steps of those apostles and prophets who, in the midst of the derision of the world, exhausted themselves in a series of efforts to enlighten and to save it. You have chosen, it is true, the better part; but it is a part which you must not hope to sustain but by the perfect subjection and mortification of every rival passion. You must be content to derive your satisfaction from yourself, or rather from your consciousness of the Divine approbation, since you will meet with few disposed to sympathize in your sorrows or rejoice in your success.

The next qualification necessary for a teacher of Christianity among heathens is the spirit of faith, by which I intend, not merely that cordial belief, of the truth which is essential to a Christian, but that unshaken persuasion of the promises of God respecting the triumph and enlargement of his kingdom which is sufficient to denominate its possessor "strong in faith." It is impossible that the mind of a missionary should be too much impressed with the beauty, glory, and grandeur of the kingdom of Christ, as it is unfolded in the oracles of the Old and New Testaments; or with the certainty of the final accomplisment of those oracles, founded on the faithfulness and omnipotence of their Author. To those parts of Scripture his attention should be especially directed in which the Holy Ghost employs and exhausts, so to speak, the whole force and splendor of inspiration in depicting the future reign of the Messiah, together with that astonishing spectacle of dignity, purity, and peace which his church will exhibit when, "having the glory of God," her bounds shall be commensurate with those of the habitable globe: when every object on which the eye shall rest will remind the spectator of the commencement of a new age, in which the tabernacle of God is with men and he dwells among them. His spirit should be imbued with the sweet and tender awe which such anticipations will infallibly produce, whence will spring a generous contempt of the world, and an ardor bordering on impatience to be employed, though in the humblest sphere, as the instrument of accelerating such a period. For, compared to this destiny in re-

serve for the children of men, compared to this glory invisible at present and hid behind the clouds which envelope this dark and troubled scene, the brightest day that has hitherto shone upon the world is midnight, and the highest splendors that have invested it the shadow of death.

Independent of these assurances, the idea of converting pagan nations to the Christian faith must appear chimerical. The attempt to persuade them to relinquish their ancient mode of thinking, corroborated by habit, by example, by interest, and to adopt a new system of opinions and feelings, and enter on a new course of life, will ever be deemed by the worldly-wise impracticable and visionary. "Pass over the isles of Chittim and see," saith the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, "and send unto Kedar, and consider dilligently and see if there be such a thing. Hath a nation changed their gods?" For a nation to change their gods is represented by the highest authority as an event almost unparalelled: and if it be so difficult to induce them to change the mode of their idolatry, how much more to persuade them to abandon it altogether! Idolatry is not to be looked upon as a mere speculative error respecting the object of worship, of little or no practical efficacy. Its hold upon the mind of a fallen creature is most tenacious, its operations most extensive. It is a corrupt practical institution, involving a whole system of sentiments and manners which perfectly moulds and transforms its votaries. It modifies human nature in every aspect under which it can be contemplated, being intimately blended and incorporated with all its perceptions of good and evil, with all its infirmities, passions, and fears. In a country like India where it has been established for ages, its ramifications are so extended as to come into contact with every mode and every incident of life. Scarce a day or an hour passes with a Hindoo, in which, by the abstinencies it enjoins and the ceremonies it prescribes, he is not reminded of his religion. It meets him at every turn, presses like the atmosphere on all sides, and holds him by a thousand invisible chains. By incessantly admonishing him of something which he must do, or something which he must forbear, it becomes the strongest of his active habits; while the multiplicity of objects of worship, distinguished by an infinite variety in their character and exploits, is sufficient to fill the whole sphere of his imagination. In the indolent repose which his constitution and climate incline him to indulge, he suffers his fancy to wander without limit amid scenes of voluptuous enjoyment or objects of terror and dismay; while revolving the history of his gods, he conceives himself absorbed in holy contemplations. There is not a vicious passion he can be disposed to cherish, not a crime he can be tempted to commit for which he may not find a sanction and an example in the legends of his gods. Though the system of polytheism established in India, considered in an argumentative light, is beneath contempt, being destitute of the least shadow of proof, as well as of all coherence in its principles; yet, viewed as an instrument of establishing a despotic empire over the mind, nothing, it must be acknowledged, was ever more artfully contrived; not to mention the distinction of castes which is obviously adapted to fix and perpetuate every other institution. That the true religion should degenerate into idolatry is easily to be accounted for from the known principles of human nature, because such deterioration is aided by its corruption, flatters its strongest propensities, and artfully adapts itself to whatever is feeble, sensitive, and voluptuous in the character of the species.

——Facilis descensus Averni.

As it is easy to descend from an elevation which it is difficult to climb, to fall from the adoration of the Supreme Being to the worship of idols demands no effort. Idolatry is strongly intrenched in the corruptions, and fortified by the weakness of human nature. Hence we find all nations have sunk into it in succession, frequently in opposition to the strongest remonstrances of inspired prophets, while we have no example in the history of the world of a single city, family or individual who has renounced it through the mere operation of unassisted reason; such is the fatal propensity of mankind to that enormity. It is the veil of the covering cast over all flesh, which nothing but the effulgence of revelation has pierced. The true religion satisfies and enlarges the reason, but militates against the inclinations of men. Resting on a few sublime truths, addressed to the understanding and conscience, affording few distinct images to the fancy, and no indulgence to the passions, it can only be planted and preserved by a continual efflux from its Divine Author, of whose spirituality and elevation it so largely partakes.

But however difficult it may be to prevail upon men to relinquish the practice of idolatry, the accomplishment of this is not the whole, perhaps not the most arduous part of your work, since you are too well acquainted with the genius of Christianity to rest satisfied with any external profession which is destitute of the fruits of the Spirit. The change you wish to realize, and which you will alone contemplate with satisfaction, is the effectual conversion of the soul from sin to holiness, and from the world to God; and how much the necessity of this

increases the difficulty of propagating the gospel among heathens with success is so obvious that I need not insist upon it at large. The valley of vision in Ezekiel, filled with bones which are very dry, is no exaggerated picture of the state of the heathen world; and what less than an Almighty power can clothe them with sinews, cover them with flesh, and breathe into them the breath of life?

Hence the absolute necessity of a vigorous faith in the promises of God respecting the future renovation of mankind, which will support you amid the greatest discouragements, prompt you to hope against hope, and inspire you with unshaken perseverance and resolution; besides that on account of the glory it gives to God, it imparts by divine appointment to its possessor an interest in his all-sufficiency and power. It is a mysterious link in the chain of moral causes and effects which connects the weakness of the creature with the almightiness of God. "Be it unto thee," said our Lord on a certain occasion, "be it unto thee according to thy faith." Faith, considered as a mere speculative assent to the truth of a divine testimony, may be looked upon as uniform or stationary; but when we consider it as a practical principle, as one of the graces of the Spirit, we perceive it to be in common with others, susceptible of continual enlargement and increase. In the degree of power which future and invisible realities exert over the mind, in the practical energy of what men profess to believe, in the promptitude and certainty with which it determines them to a correspondent conduct, there is the utmost diversity even among those who believe with the heart. The faith to which the Scriptures attach such momentous consequences, and ascribe such glorious exploits, is a practical habit, which, like every other, is strengthened and increased by continual exercise. It is nourished by meditation, by prayer, and the devout perusal of the Scriptures; and the light which it diffuses becomes stronger and clearer by an unintercepted converse with its object, and a faithful compliance with its dictates; as on the contrary it is weakened and obscured by whatever wounds the conscience or impairs the purity and spirituality of the mind. This is the shield which will cover you from every assault; the chief part of that defensive armor which it behooves you to put on. Reposing on the word of Him with whom all things are possible, of Him who cannot lie; in the formidable bulwarks of idolatry, in the invincible rampart of prejudice and superstition which the great adversary of mankind has cast up to obstruct the progress of truth, you will see nothing to appal you: you will feel the battle not to be yours, but the Lord's, who, determined to subdue his enemies under his feet, condescends to employ you as an humble instrument of his victories; and instead of sinking under the consciousness of weakness, you will glory in your infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon you.

Allow me to remind you of the absolute necessity of cultivating a mild, conciliating, affectionate temper, in the discharge of your office. If an uninterested spectator, after a careful perusal of the New Testament, were asked what he conceived to be its distinguishing characteristic, he would reply without hesitation, that wonderful spirit of philanthropy by which it is distinguished. It is a perpetual commentary on that sublime aphorism, *God is love.* As the Christian religion is an exhibition of the incomprehensible mercy of God to a guilty race, so it is dispensed in a manner perfectly congenial with its nature; and the book which contains it is replete with such unaffected strokes of tenderness and goodness as are to be found in no other volume. The benign spirit of the gospel infused itself into the breast of its first missionaries. In St. Paul, for example, we behold the most heroic resolution, the most lofty superiority to all the modes of intimidation and danger, a spirit which rose with its difficulties and exulted in the midst of the most dismaying objects; yet when we look more narrowly into his character, and investigate his motives, we perceive it was his attachment to mankind that inspired him with this intrepidity, and urged him to conflicts more painful and arduous than the votaries of glory have ever sustained. Who would have supposed it possible for the same breast to be the seat of so much energy and so much softness? that he who changed the face of the world by his preaching, and while a prisoner made his judge tremble on the tribunal, could stoop to embrace a fugitive slave, and to employ the most exquisite address to effect his reconciliation with his master? The conversion of Onesimus afforded him a joy "like the joy of harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil." When the spiritual interests of mankind were concerned, no difficulties so formidable as to shake his resolution, no details so insignificant as to escape his notice. To the utmost inflexibility of principle he joined the gentlest condescension to human infirmity, "becoming all things to all men, that he might win some: to the Jews he became a Jew, that he might gain the Jews, to them that were without law, as without law," adapting on all occasions his modes of address to the character and disposition of those with whom he conversed. It was the love of Christ and of souls that

produced and harmonized those apparent discordances.

Such is the example you must propose for your imitation, if you would realize to any considerable extent the object of your mission to the heathen. By a mild and unassuming deportment, by an attention to their worldly as well as to their spiritual interests, by adopting, as far as you have ability, whatever may contribute to their happiness and improvement, convince them that you are the friend of man. When you have established yourself in their affections, you have gained an important point; you have possessed yourself of a signal advantage for the successful prosecution of your work.

Your business is to persuade men; and how can you expect to succeed unless you conciliate their regard? which is more necessary on account of the seeming severity which attaches to some part of the doctrine of Christ. Were you permitted to inculcate a self-pleasing doctrine, the want of suavity and gentleness of manner might easily be dispensed with; the laxity of the precept would compensate for the austerity of the teacher. But when you are called to insist on the state of man as a fallen and guilty creature, to enforce the necessity of self-denial, to impose the most powerful restraints on the indulgence of criminal passions; when you must denounce the wrath of God against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men, great mildness and affection are requisite to prevent such representations from exciting disgust. What is awful and alarming in Christianity should be softened and tempered by a persuasive tenderness of address. Let it be your care to divest religion of whatever is unlovely and repulsive, that it may appear not only pure, but gentle; not only majestic, but amiable; equally favourable to the enjoyment and the communication of happiness. But I have dwelt longer on this head than was necessary, when I recollect that the person I am addressing is distinguished by a temper which will render the mild condescensions I am recommending not more his duty than his delight.

The affectionate and conciliatory disposition we have been enforcing must be combined with prudence and the dilligent study of human nature, which you will find absolutely necessary to conduct you through intricate and unbeaten paths. St. Paul frequently reminds the Thessalonians of the *manner of his entrance* among them. In the first introduction of the gospel among a people, it is of great importance that every step be well weighed, that nothing be done which is rash, offensive, or indecorous, but every precaution employed consistent with godly simplicity to disarm prejudice and conciliate respect; nor is there any thing in the conduct of the first ministers of the gospel more to be admired than the exquisite propriety with which they conducted themselves in the most delicate situations. Their zeal was exempt from indecorum, their caution from timidity or art. In the commencement of every great and hazardous undertaking the first measures are usually decisive, at least in those instances in which success is dependent, under God, on the voluntary co operation of mankind. A single act of imprudence is sufficient to blast the undertaking of a missionary, which, in the situation of an ordinary minister, would scarcely be felt. The best method of securing yourself from errors in this quarter is to endeavor to acquire as large a measure as possible of the graces of the spirit, to be deeply imbued with the wisdom which is from above. Nothing subtle or refined should enter into the views of a Christian missionary. Let him be continually elevating his principles, and purifying his motives; let him be clothed with humility, and actuated on all occasions with love to God and the souls of men, and his character cannot fail of being marked with a propriety and beauty which will ultimately command universal esteem. These were the only arts which a Schwartz in the east, and a Brainerd in the west, condescended to cultivate.

It must be remembered, however, that the functions of a missionary connect him more with mankind than ordinary ministers, and less admit of an entire abstraction from the world; on which account he will sometimes be exposed to difficulties from which nothing can extricate him but a considerable acquaintance with men and things.—He will probably be called to transact affairs of considerable moment with persons in superior stations, with men of dissimilar characters and habits, of different nations and religions, who possess nothing in common but the epidemic selfishness of human nature; in an intercourse with whom he will need the wisdom of the serpent combined with the innocence of the dove. The prudence, however, which it is desirable a missionary should possess is not a timid, calculating policy; it is manly and heroic, operating with promptitude and vigor on an extensive fund of knowledge, acquired by habits of acute and vigilant observation. Of many functions of life it is possible to foresee the duties they comprise, and to ascertain beforehand the extent of their demand on our time and talents. In the office of a missionary it is impossible. His engagements must be in a great degree fortuitous, arising out of circumstances which he could neither foresee nor control; and hence, unless he possess a prompt and en-

lightened judgment, he will often feel himself embarrassed and perplexed.

There is much in the situation of a missionary calculated to keep him awake and attentive to his duties. To a stated pastor, it is confessed, there are not wanting powerful motives to diligence and exertion, at the same time that it is equally obvious there are considerable temptations to indolence and formality. Since the services he is engaged to perform admit of little variety, and are easily reducible to a system, they are in no small danger of being performed rather from the mechanism of habit than the impulse of feeling, and much ardour of mind is requisite to infuse freshness and novelty into a series of operations so uniform, In the performance of duties which proceed in a settled routine, it is equally difficult to feel and to impart an interest. With the missionary it is quite the reverse. Incapable as he is of forming a conception of the situation in which he may be placed, or of the difficulties with which he may be surrounded, he must be conscious his undertaking involves a character of enterprise and hazard. He is required to explore new paths; and leaving the footsteps of the flock, to go in quest of the lost sheep, on whatever mountain it may have wandered, or in whatever valley it may be hid. He must be prepared to encounter prejudice and error in strange and unwonted shapes, to trace the aberrations of reason, and the deviations from rectitude through all the diversified mazes of superstition and idolatry. He is engaged in a series of offensive operations: he is in the field of battle, wielding *weapons which are not carnal, but mighty, through God, to the pulling down the strongholds of Satan.* When not in action he is yet encamped in an enemy's country, where nothing can secure his acquisitions or preserve him from surprise but incessant vigilance. The voluntary exile from his native country to which he submits is sufficient to remind him continually of his important embassy, and to induce a solicitude that so many sacrifices may not be made, so many privations undergone in vain. He holds the lamp of instruction to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death; and while there remains a particle of ignorance not expelled, a single prejudice not vanquished, a sinful or idolatrous custom not relinquished, his task is left unfinished. It is not enough for him on a stated day to address an audience on the concerns of eternity: he must teach from house to house, and be instant in season and out of season, embracing every opportunity which offers of inculcating the principles of a new religion as well as of *confirming the souls of his disciples.* He must consider himself as the mouth and interpreter of that wisdom *which crieth without, which uttereth her voice in the streets, which crieth in the chief places of concourse.*

Under these impressions you will peruse the Acts of the Apostles, which record the methods by which the gospel was first propagated, with deep attention, where you will trace precedents the most instructive as well as difficulties surmounted and trials endured exactly similar to your own; nor will you fail to feel a sympathy of spirit with those holy men in their labors and sufferings, which other ministers can but very imperfectly possess. Encompassed with such a cloud of witnesses, you will esteem it no inconsiderable honor to share in the same combat, encounter the same enemies, and accomplish the share allotted you of those sufferings which remain to Christ's mystical body. I scarcely need recommend to your attention the letters of St. Paul to Timothy and Titus, where the office of an evangelist (for such you must consider yourself) is delineated with such precision and fidelity. While you peruse his inspired directions you are entitled to consider yourself as addressed, inasmuch as the spirit under whose direction they were written unquestionably intended them for the instruction of all who are in similar circumstances.

In directing your view to apostolical precedents, attended not so much to their *letter* as to their *spirit:* investigate carefully the circumstances in which they were placed; compare them with your own with respect to the particulars in which they coincide and in which they differ, that you may follow them, not as a servile copyist, but as a judicious and enlightened imitator.

Be *strong* in the grace that is in the Lord Jesus. Among the nations which will be the scene of your future labors, you will witness a state of things essentially different from that which prevails here, where the name of Christ is held in reverence, the principal doctrines of his religion speculatively acknowledged, and the institutes of worship widely extended and diffused.—The leaven of Christian piety has spread itself in innumerable directions, modified public opinion, improved the state of society, and given birth to many admirable institutions unknown to pagan countries.—The authority of the Saviour is recognised, his injunctions in some instances obeyed, and the outrages of impiety restrained by law, by custom, and, above all, by the silent counteraction of piety in its sincere professors. Hence, in combatting the vices and irreligion of the age, so many principles are conceded, and so much ground already won from the adversary, that little remains but to urge him with the legitimate

consequences of his own opinions, and to rouse the dormant energies of conscience by the exhibition of acknowledged truth. Ministers of the gospel in this quarter of the globe resemble the commanders of an army stationed in a conquered country, whose inhabitants, overawed and subdued, yield a partial obedience; they have sufficient employment in attempting to conciliate the affections of the natives, and in carrying into execution the orders and regulations of their Prince; since there is much latent disaffection, though no open rebellion, a strong partiality to their former rulers, with few attempts to erect the standard of revolt.

In India, Satan maintains an almost undisputed empire, and the powers of darkness, secure of their dominion, riot and revel at their pleasure, sporting themselves with the misery of their vassals, whom they incessantly agitate with delusive hopes and fantastic terrors, leading them captive at their will, while few efforts have been made to despoil them of their usurped authority. Partial invasions have been attempted and a few captives disenthralled; but the strength and sinews of empire remain entire, and that dense and palpable darkness which invests it has scarcely felt the impression of a few feeble and scattered rays. In India you will witness the predominance of a system which provides for the worship of gods many and of lords many, while it excludes the adoration of the Supreme Being, legitimates cruelty, polygamy, and lust, debases the standard of morals, oppresses with ceremonies those whom it deprives of instruction, and suggests no solid hope of happiness beyond the grave.

You will witness with indignation that monstrous alliance between impurity and devotion, obscenity and religion, which characterizes the popular idolatry of all nations, and which, in opposition to the palliating sophistry of infidels, sufficiently evinces it to be, what the Scriptures assert—the worship of devils, not of God.

When we consider that moral causes operate on free agents, we shall not be surprised to find their effects are less uniform than those which result from the action of material and physical powers, and that human minds are susceptible of opposite impressions from the same objects.

On such as have neither been established in the evidences nor felt the efficacy of revealed religion, a residence in a pagan country has usually a most pernicious effect, and matures latent irreligion into open impiety. The absence of Christian institutions and Christian examples leaves them at liberty to gratify their sensual inclinations without control, and the familiar contemplation of pagan manners and customs gradually wears out every trace and vestige of the religion in which they were educated, and emboldens them to consider it in the light of a local superstition. They are no further converts to the Brahminical faith than to prefer it to their own; that is, they prefer the religion they can despise with impunity to one that afflicts their consciences,—that which leaves them free to that which restrains them. As the secret language of their heart had always been, *cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from among us,* in the absence of God, of his institutes, and his worship, they find a congenial element, nor are they at all displeased at perceiving the void filled with innumerable fantastic shapes and chimeras; for they contemplate religion with great composure, providing it be sufficiently ridiculous.

You, I am persuaded, will view the condition of millions who are involved in the shades of idolatry, originally formed in the image of God, now totally estranged from their great Parent, and reposing their trust on things which cannot profit, with different emotions, and will be anxious to recall them to the Bishop and Shepherd of their souls. Instead of considering the most detestable species of idolatry as so many different modes of worshipping the One Supreme, agreeable to the jargon of infidels, you will not hesitate to regard them as an impious attempt to share his incommunicable honors: as composing that image of jealousy which he is engaged to smite, confound, and destroy. When you compare the incoherence, extravagance, and absurdity which pervade the systems of polytheism with the simple and sublime truths of the gospel, the result will be an increased attachment to that mystery of godliness. When you observe the anxiety of the Hindoo devotee to obtain the pardon of sin, and the incredible labors and sufferings which he cheerfully undergoes to quiet the perturbations of conscience, the doctrine of the cross will rise, if possible, still higher in your esteem, and you will long for an opportunity of crying in his ears, *Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.* When you witness the immolation of females on the funeral pile of their husbands, and the barbarous treatment of aged parents left by their children to perish on the banks of the Ganges, you will recognise the footsteps of him who was a murderer from the beginning, and will be impatient to communicate the mild and benevolent maxims of the gospel. When you behold an immense population held in chains by that detestable institution the *caste*, as well as bowed down under an intolerable weight of Brahminical superstitions, you will long to impart the liberty which Christ confers, *where there is neither*

Jew nor Greek, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ is all and in all.

The cultivation of a wilderness, however, requires a more robust and vigorous industry than is necessary to preserve in a good condition the ground which is already reclaimed. The noxious produce of a long tract of time must be extirpated, the stubborn and intractable soil broken up, marshes drained, irregularities levelled, and much persevering labor employed, ere the ordinary operations of agriculture can commence, or the seed be cast into the earth. In attempting to evangelize the inhabitants of pagan countries, you must expect to encounter peculiar difficulties: you will meet in the natives with the ignorance and mental imbecility of children, without the candour, simplicity, and freedom from prejudice which are among the charms of that tender age. To efface erroneous impressions, to eradicate false principles, and reduce them even to a natural state, defective and corrupt as that state is, will be no inconsiderable task, since there is not only an immense void to be filled and great deficiencies to be supplied, but principles and prejudices to contend with, capable of the most active resistance.

In recommending the principles of Christianity to a pagan nation, I would by no means advise the adoption of a refined and circuitous course of instruction, commencing with an argumentative exposition of the principles of natural religion, and from thence advancing to the peculiar doctrines of revelation; nor would I advise you to devote much time to an elaborate confutation of the Hindoo or Mahometan systems. The former of these methods would be far too subtle and intricate for popular use; the latter calculated to irritate. Great practical effects on the populace are never produced by profound argumentation; and every thing which tends to irritation and disgust should be carefully avoided. Let your instruction be in the form of a *testimony:* let it, with respect to the mode of exhibiting it, though not to the spirit of the teacher, be *dogmatic. Testify* repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. It might become a Socrates, who was left to the light of nature, to express himself with diffidence, and to affirm that he had spared no pains in acting up to the character of a philosopher,—in other words, a diligent inquirer after truth; but whether he had philosophized aright, or attained the object of his inquiries, he knew not, but left it to be ascertained in that world on which he was entering. In him such indications of modest distrust were graceful and affecting, but would little become the disciple of revelation or the Christian minister, who is entitled to say with St. John, *we* know *that the whole world lieth in wickedness, and that the Son of God is come and hath given us an understanding to know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ.*

After reminding them of their state as guilty and polluted creatures, which the ceremonies of their religion teach them to confess, exhibit to the inhabitants of Hindostan the cross of Christ as their only refuge. Acquaint them with his incarnation, his character as the Son of God and the Son of man, his offices, and the design of his appearance; not with the air of a disputer of this world, but of him who is conscious to himself of his possessing the medicine of life, the treasure of immortality, which he is anxious to impart to guilty men. Insist fearlessly on the futility and vanity of all human methods of expiation, on the impotence of idols, and the command of God to *all men every where to repent, inasmuch as he has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness.*— Display the sufferings of Christ like one who was an eyewitness of those sufferings, and hold up the blood, the precious blood of atonement, as issuing warm from the cross. It is a peculiar excellence of the gospel, that in its wonderful adaptation to the state and condition of mankind as fallen creatures, it bears intrinsic marks of its divinity, and is supported not less by internal than by external evidence. By a powerful appeal to the conscience, by a faithful delineation of man in his grandeur and in his weakness, in his original capacity for happiness, and his present misery and guilt, present this branch of its evidence in all its force. Seize on every occasion those features of Christianity which render it interesting; and by awakening the fears and exciting the hopes of your hearers, endeavor to annihilate every other object, and make it appear what it really is, the pearl of great price, the sovereign balm, the cure of every ill, the antidote of death, the precursor of immortality. In such a ministry, fear not to give loose to all the ardour of your soul, to call into action every emotion and every faculty which can exalt or adorn it. You will find ample scope for all its force and tenderness; and should you be called to pour your life as a libation on the offering of the Gentiles, you will only have the more occasion to exult and rejoice.

In order to qualify yourself for the performance of these duties, it is above all things necessary for you to acquaint yourself with the genuine doctrines of Christianity in their full extent; but it will be neither necessary nor expedient to initiate your converts into those controversies which, through a long course of time, have grown up among Christians. Endeavor to acquire

as extensive and perfect a knowledge as possible of the dictates of inspiration, and by establishing your hearers in these, preclude the entrance of error rather than confute it. Be always prepared to answer every modest inquiry into the grounds of your faith and practice; and that you may be more capable of entering into their difficulties and anticipating their objections, place yourself as much as possible in the situation of those whom you are called to instruct. When we consider the permanant consequences likely to result from first impressions on the minds of pagans, the few advantages they possess for religious discussion, and the extreme confidence they are likely to repose in their spiritual guides, you must be conscious how important it is to *plant wholly a right seed*. Your defective representations of truth will not soon be supplied, nor the errors you plant extirpated, since we find societies of Christians in these parts of the world, where discussion and controversy abound, retain from generation to generation the distinguishing tenets of their leaders. In forming the plan and laying the foundation of an edifice which it is proposed shall last forever, it is desirable that no materials should be admitted but such as are solid and durable, and no ornaments introduced but such as are chaste and noble. As it would be too much to expect you should perfectly succeed in imparting the mind of Christ, might I be permitted to advise, you will lean rather to the side of *defect* than *excess*, and in points of inferior magnitude omit what is true rather than inculcate what is doubtful; since the influence of religion on the heart depends not on the multiplicity, but on the quality of its objects.

The unnecessary multiplication of articles of faith gives a character of littleness to Christianity, and tends in no small degree to impress a similar character on its professors. The grandeur and efficacy of the gospel results, not from an immense accumulation of little things, but from its powerful exhibition of a few great ones. If you are determined to initiate your hearers into the subtleties and disputes which have prevailed in the Western world, I would recommend you, in imitation of the church of Rome, to dispense with the New Testament as the basis of instruction, and to betake yourself to the writings of the schoolmen; for that divine volume, rightly interpreted, supplies no aliment to a disputatious humour, which has never ceased, since it was first introduced, to be the scoff of infidels, and the plague of the church.

Among the indirect benefits which may be expected to arise from missions, we may be allowed to anticipate a more pure, simple, apostolical mode of presenting the gospel, which it may be doubted whether any of the various denominations under which the followers of Christ have been classed have exhibited precisely as he and his apostles taught it. In consequence of the collision of disputes, and the hostile aspect which rival sects bear to each other, they are scarcely in a situation to investigate truth with perfect impartiality. Few or none of them have derived their sentiments purely from the sacred oracles, as the result of independent inquiry; but almost universally from some distinguished leader, who at the commencement of the Reformation formed his faith, and planned his discipline, amid the heat and fury of theological combat. Terms have been invented for the purpose of excluding error, or more accurately defining the truth, to which the New Testament is a stranger, and on those terms associations and impressions ingrafted which, in some instances perhaps, little correspond with the divine simplicity of the gospel.—It is far from my intention to insinuate that serious and fundamental errors may justly be imputed to the classes of Christians to whom I refer; I am fully convinced of the contrary:—but it may be worth while to inquire whether we have not all in our turn receded somewhat from the standard, if not by the adoption of positive error, yet by a disproportionate attention to some parts of revelation, to the neglect of others equally important, in consequence of an undue partiality to our respective peculiarities.

The situation of a missionary retired from the scene of debate and controversy, who has continually before his eyes the objects which presented themselves to the attention of the apostles, is favourable to an emancipation from prejudice of every sort, and to the acquisition of just and enlarged conceptions of Christianity. It will be your lot to walk the same wards in this great hospital, and to prescribe to the same class of patients that first experienced the salutary and renovating power of the gospel. The gods which are worshipped at this time in India are supposed by Sir William Jones to be the very same, under different names, with those who shared the adoration of Italy and Greece when the gospel was first published in those regions; so that you will be an eyewitness of the very evils and enormities which then prevailed in the Western hemisphere, and which the sword of the Spirit so effectually subdued. You will be under great advantages for ascending to first principles—for tracing the stream to its head and spring, by having incessantly to contemplate that state of things in a moral view of which every page of Scripture assumes the existence, but of which the inhabitants of Europe have no living experience. It is with great satisfaction accord-

ingly I have observed the harmony of doctrine, the identity of instruction which has pervaded the ministry of Protestant missionaries, who have been employed under the auspices of different denominations of Christians.

If to survey mankind in different situations, and under the influence of opposite institutions, civil and religious, tends to elevate the mind above vulgar prejudice, by none in this advantage more eminently possessed than by Christian missionaries. In addition to the advantages usually anticipated from foreign travel, their attention is directly turned to man in the most interesting light in which he can be viewed. An intelligent missionary, in consequence of daily conversing with the natives on the most momentous subjects, and at the most affecting moments, has opportunities of becoming acquainted, not merely with the surface of manners, but with the interior of the character, which can rarely fall to the lot of any other person; besides that Christianity, it may be justly affirmed, is the best decipherer of the human heart, and is that alone which can solve its contradictions and explain its anomalies. Hence it may be fairly expected, nor will the expectation dissapoint us, that an experienced missionary, possessed of the talent and habit of observation, will, in every country, deserve to be classed among the most enlightened of its inhabitants.

Few things more powerfully tend to enlarge the mind than conversing with great objects and engaging in great pursuits.—That the object you are pursuing is entitled to that appellation will not be questioned by him who reflects on the infinite advantages derived from Christianity to every nation and clime where it has prevailed in its purity, and that the prodigious superiority which Europe possesses over Asia and Africa is chiefly to be ascribed to this cause. It is the possession of a religion which comprehends the seeds of endless improvement which maintains an incessant struggle with whatever is barbarous, selfish, or inhuman; which, by unveiling futurity, clothes morality with the sanction of a divine law, and harmonizes utility and virtue in every combination of events, and in every stage of existence; a religion which, by affording the most just and sublime conceptions of the Deity, and of the moral relations of man, has given birth at once to the loftiest speculation and the most child-like humility, uniting the inhabitants of the globe into one family, and in the bonds of a common salvation. It is this religion which, rising upon us like a finer sun, has quickened moral vegetation, and replenished Europe with talents, virtues, and exploits which, in spite of its physical disadvantages, have rendered it a paradise, the delight and wonder of the world. An attempt to propagate this religion among the natives of Hindostan may perhaps be stigmatized as visionary and romantic; but to enter the lists of controversy with those who would deny it to be great and noble would be a degradation to reason.

On these principles the cause of missions has recently been sustained in parliament, and the propriety and expedience of attempting the propagation of Christianity in India demonstrated by arguments and considerations suited to the meridian of such assemblies. We feel ourselves highly indebted to those distinguished senators who exerted their eloquence on that occasion, and have no hesitation in asserting that a more wise and magnanimous measure was never adopted by an enlightened legislature than that of facilitating the communication of Christian knowledge to the subjects of our Eastern empire. As a political measure, nothing more unexceptionable or beneficial can be conceived. It is not in this light, however, we would wish you to regard your present undertaking. What may satisfy the views of a statesman ought not to satisfy a Christian minister. It is the business of the former to project for this world; of the latter for eternity. The former proposes to improve the advantages and to mitigate the evils of life; the latter, the conquest of death and the achievement of immortality. They proceed in the same direction, it is true, as far as they go; but the one proceeds infinitely farther than the other.

In the views of the most enlightened statesmen, compared to those of a Christian minister, there is a littleness and limitation which is not to be imputed in one case as a moral imperfection, nor in the other as a personal merit; the difference arising purely from the disparity of the subjects they respectively speculate. Should you be asked on your arrival in India, as it is very probable you will, what there is in Christianity which renders it so inestimable in your eyes, that you judged it fit to undertake so long, dangerous, and expensive a voyage for the purpose of imparting it,—you will answer, without hesitation, it is the power of God to salvation; nor will any view of it short of this, or the inculcation of it for any inferior purpose, enable it to produce even those moralizing and civilizing effects it is so powerfully adapted to accomplish. Christianity will civilize, it is true, but it is only when it is allowed to develope the energies by which it sanctifies. Christianity will inconceivably ameliorate the present condition of being,—who doubts it? Its universal prevalence, not in the name but in reality, will convert this world into a semi-paradisiacal state; but it is only while it is permitted to prepare its inhabitants for

a better. Let her be urged to forget her celestial origin and destiny, to forget that "she came from God, and returns to God;" and whether she is employed by the artful and enterprising, as the instrument of esta blishing a spiritual empire and dominion over mankind, or by the philanthropist as the means of promoting their civilization and improvement, she resents the foul indignity, claps her wings and takes her flight, leaving nothing but a base and sanctimonious hypocrisy in her room.

Preach it then, my dear brother, with a constant recollection that such is its charac ter and aim. Preach it with a perpetual view to eternity, and with the simplicity and affection with which you would address your dearest friends, were they assembled round your dying bed. While others are ambitious to form a citizen of earth, be it yours to train him for heaven; to raise up the temple of God from among the ancient desolations; to contribute your part towards the formation and perfection of that eternal society which will flourish in inviolable purity and order, when all human associations shall be dissolved, and the princes of this world shall come to naught. In the pursuit of these objects, let it be your ambition to tread in the footsteps of a Brainerd and a Schwartz; I may add, of your excellent relative, with whom we are happy in perceiving you to possess a congeniality of character, not less than an affinity of blood.

But should you succeed beyond your utmost hope, expect not to escape the ridicule of the ungodly or the censure of the world; but be content to sustain that sort of reputation, and run that sort of career invariably allotted to the Christian missionary; where, agreeable to the experience of St. Paul, obscurity and notoriety, admiration and scorn, sorrows and consolations, attachments the most tender and opposition the most violent, are interchangeably mingled.

But whatever be the sentiments of the world, respecting which you will indulge no excessive solicitude, your name will be precious in India, your memory dear to multitudes, who will reverence in you the instrument of their eternal salvation; and how much more satisfaction will accrue from the consciousness of this, than from the loudest human applause, your own reflections will determine. At that awful moment when you are called to bid a final adieu to the world, and to look into eternity,—when the hopes, fears, and agitations which sublunary objects shall have occasioned will subside like a feverish dream, or a vision of the night, the certainty of belonging to the number of the saved will be the only consolation; and when to this is joined the conviction of having contributed to enlarge that number, your joy will be full. You will be conscious of having conferred a benefit on your fellow creatures, you know not precisely what, but of such a nature that it will require all the illumination of eternity to measure its dimensions and ascertain its value. Having followed Christ in the *regeneration*, in the preparatory labors accompanying the renovation of mankind, you will rise to an elevated station in a world where the scantiest portion is a "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, and a conspicuous place will be assigned you in that unchanging firmament where those who have turned many to righteousness shall shine as the stars forever and ever.

But it is time I should close this address, which has already been extended much further than was at first designed. On the necessity of maintaining an exemplary purity of conduct little or nothing has been said, because such is our confidence in your character that we deemed admonition of this kind superfluous. As you are, however, still in the body, and will be exposed to numerous temptations, you will feel the propriety of being jealous over yourself with a godly jealousy, and exerting a continual care and vigilance, lest, in the awful language of the apostle, after preaching to others, you yourself should be a castaway. I need not remind you, that as the society under whose auspices you are proceeding to India have on no occasion employed a missionary in whom they reposed more confidence, or of whom they formed more raised expectations, if you should become vain, worldly, sensual, indolent, and consequently useless, ours will not be an ordinary disappointment; we shall have fallen from a good hope. You will be sensible of the indispensable necessity of not interfering with the politics of India, nor of giving the smallest ground of umbrage and distrust to the constituted authorities, to whom it will be your duty not less than your interest to pay on all occasions in return for the protection they will yield, the most respectful deference.

Let me also recommend you to listen to the advice, and be guided by the suggestions, as far as your conscience will permit, of your fathers in the mission, and of Dr. Carey in particular, whose wisdom and experience, to say nothing of his relationship to you, entitle him to reverential attention. you are now about to be removed from us, who, it is probable, shall see your face no more; but you will not be removed from the communion of saints, which no seas can divide, no distance impair, in which we shall often meet at a throne of grace, whence fervent prayers will ascend to the Father of mercies that he may keep you under his holy protection, and cause the richest of his blessings to descend "on the head of him who was separate from his brethren."

MODERN INFIDELITY CONSIDERED,

WITH RESPECT TO

ITS INFLUENCE ON SOCIETY.

IN A SERMON

PREACHED AT THE BAPTIST MEETING, CAMBRIDGE.

BY ROBERT HALL, A. M.

PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY. LIBRARY. RLC. APR 1881

Professing themselves wise, they became fools.—*St. Paul.*

Sunt qui in fortunæ jam casibus, omnia ponant,
Et nullo credant mundum rectore moveri,
Natura volvente vices et lucis, et anni;
Atque ideo intrepidi quæcunque altaria tangunt.—*Juv.*

PREFACE.

The author knows not whether it be necessary to apologise for the extraordinary length of this sermon, which so much exceeds the usual limits of public discourses; for it is only for the reader to conceive (by a fiction of the imagination, if he pleases so to consider it) that the patience of his audience indulged him with their attention during its delivery. The fact is, not being in the habit of writing his sermons, this discourse was not committed to paper till after it was delivered: so that the phraseology may probably vary, and the bulk be somewhat extended: but the substance is certainly retained.

He must crave the indulgence of the religious public for having blended so little theology with it. He is fully aware the chief attention of a Christian minister should be occupied in explaining the doctrines and enforcing the duties of genuine Christianity. Nor is he chargeable, he hopes, in the exercise of his public functions, with any remarble deviation from this rule of conduct: yet he is equally convinced, excursions into other topics are sometimes both lawful and necessary. The versatility of error demands a correspondent variety in the methods of defending truth: and from whom have the public more right to expect its defence, in opposition to the encroachments of error and infidelity, than from those who devote their studies and their lives to the advancement of virtue and religion? Accordingly, a multitude of publications on these subjects, equally powerful in argument and impressive in manner, have issued from divines of different persuasions, which must be allowed to have done the utmost honor to the clerical profession. The most luminous statements of the evidences of Christianity, on historical grounds, have been made; the petulent cavils of infidels satisfactorily refuted; and their ignorance if not put to shame, at least amply exposed; so that revelation, as far as truth and reason can prevail, is on all sides triumphant.

There is one point of view, however, in which the respective systems remain to be examined, which, though hitherto little considered, is forced upon our attention by the present conduct of our adversaries; that is, their *influence on society*. The controversy appears to have taken a new turn. The advocates of infidelity, baffled in the field of argument, though unwilling to relinquish the contest, have changed their mode of attack; and seem less disposed to impugn the authority than to supersede the use of revealed religion, by giving such representations of man and society as are calculated to make its sanctions appear unreasonable and unnecessary. Their aim is not so much to discredit the pretensions of any particular religion as to set aside the principles common to all.

To obliterate the sense of Deity, of moral sanctions, and a future world,—and by these means to prepare the way for the total subversion of every institution, both social and religious, which men have hitherto been accustomed to revere,—is evidently

the principal object of modern skeptics: the first sophists who have avowed an attempt to govern the world, without inculcating the persuasion of a superior power. It might well excite our surprise to behold an effort to shake off the yoke of religion, which was totally unknown during the prevalence of gross superstition, reserved for a period of the world distinguished from every other by the possession of a revelation more pure, more perfect, and better authenticated than the enlightened sages of antiquity ever ventured to anticipate, were we not fully persuaded the immaculate holiness of this revelation is precisely that which renders it disgusting to men who are determined at all events to retain their vices. Our Saviour furnishes the solution:—"They love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil; neither will they come to the light, lest their deeds should be reproved.

While all the religions, the Jewish excepted, which, previous to the promulgation of Christianity, prevailed in the world, partly the contrivance of human policy, partly the offspring of ignorant fear, mixed with the mutilated remains of traditionary revelation, were favorable to the indulgence of some vices, and but feebly restrained the practice of others; between vice of every sort and in every degree, and the religion of Jesus, there subsists an irreconcileable enmity, an eternal discord. The dominion of Christianity being in the very essence of it the dominion of virtue, we need look no further for the sources of hostility in any one who oppose it than their attachment to vice and disorder.

This view of the controversy, if it be just, demonstrates its supreme importance; and furnishes the strongest plea with every one with whom it is not a matter of indifference whether vice or virtue, delusion or truth, governs the world, to exert his talents, in whatever proportion they are possessed, in "contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." In such a crisis, is it not best for Christians of all denominations, that they may better concentrate their forces against the common adversary, to suspend for the present their internal disputes; imitating the policy of wise states, who have never failed to consider the invasion of an enemy as the signal for terminating the contests of party? Internal peace is the best fruit we can reap from external danger. The momentous contest at issue between the Christian church and infidels may instruct us how trivial, for the most part, are the controversies of its members with each other; and that the different ceremonies, opinions, and practices by which they are distinguished correspond to the variety of feature and complexion discernible in the offspring of the same parent, among whom there subsists the greatest family likeness. May it please God so to dispose the minds of Christians of every visible church and community, "that Ephraim may no longer vex Judah, nor Judah Ephraim;" that the only rivalry felt in future may be who shall most advance the interests of our common Christianity; and the only provocation sustained, that of "provoking each other to love and good works!" When at the distance of more than half a century, Christianity was assaulted by a Woolston, a Tindal, and a Morgan, it was ably supported by a clergyman of the established church, and writers among Protestant Dissenters. The labors of a Clarke and a Butler were associated with those of a Doddridge, a Leland, and a Lardner, with such equal reputation and success, as to make it evident that the intrinsic excellence of religion needs not the aid of external appendages; but that, with or without a dowry, her charms are of sufficient power to fix and engage the heart.

The writer of this discourse will feel himself happy, should his example stimulate any of his brethren of superior abilities to contribute their exertions in so good a cause. His apology for not entering more at large into the proofs of the being of God,* and the evidences of Christianity,† is, that these subjects have been already handled with great ability by various writers; and that he rather wished to confine himself to one view of the subject—The total incompatibility of skeptical principles with the existence of society. Should his life be spared, he may probably at some future time enter into a fuller and more particular examination of the infidel philosophy, both with respect to its speculative principles and its practical effects,—its influence on society and on the individual. In the mean time he humbly consecrates this discourse to the honor of that Saviour, who, when the means of a more liberal offering are wanting, commends the widow's mite.

CAMBRIDGE, *January* 18, 1801.

* See an excellent sermon on Atheism, by the Rev. Mr. Estlin, of Bristol, at whose meeting the substance of this discourse was first preached. In the sermon referred to, the argument for the existence of a Deity is stated with the utmost clearness and precision; and the sophistry of Dupuis, a French infidel, refuted in a very satisfactory manner.

† It is almost superfluous to name a work so universally known as Dr. Paley's View of the Evidences of Christianity, which is probably, without exception, the most clear and satisfactory statement of the historical proofs of the Christian religion ever exhibited in any age or country.

A SERMON.

EPHES. ii. 12.—*Without God in the world.*

As the Christian ministry is established for the instruction of men, throughout every age, in truth and holiness, it must adapt itself to the ever-shifting scenes of the moral world, and stand ready to repel the attacks of impiety and error, under whatever form they may appear. The church and the world form two societies so distinct, and are governed by such opposite principles and maxims, that, as well from this contrariety as from the express warnings of Scripture, true Christians must look for a state of warfare, with this consoling assurance, that the church like the burning bush beheld by Moses in the land of Midian, may be encompassed with flames, but will never be consumed.

When she was delivered from the persecuting power of Rome, she only experienced a change of trials. The oppression of external violence was followed by the more dangerous and insiduous attacks of internal enemies. The freedom of inquiry claimed and asserted at the Reformation degenerated, in the hands of men who professed the principles without possessing the spirit of the Reformers, into a fondness for speculative refinements; and consequently, into a source of dispute, faction, and heresy. While Protestants attended more to the points on which they differed than to those in which they agreed,—while more zeal was employed in settling ceremonies and defending subtleties than in enforcing plain revealed truths,—the lovely fruits of peace and charity perished under the storms of controversy.

In this disjointed and disordered state of the Christian church, they who never looked into the interior of Christianity were apt to suspect, that to a subject so fruitful in particular disputes must attach a general uncertainty; and that a religion founded on revelation could never have occasioned such discordancy of principle and practice among its disciples. Thus infidelity is the joint offspring of an irreligious temper and unholy speculation, employed not in examining the evidences of Christianity, but in detecting the vices and imperfections of professing Christians. It has passed through various stages, each distinguished by higher gradations of impiety; for when men arrogantly abandon their guide, and wilfully shut their eyes on the light of heaven, it is wisely ordained that their errors shal multiply at every step, until their extravagance confutes itself, and the mischief of their principles works its own antidote. That such has been the progress of infidelity will be obvious from a slight survey of its history.

Lord Herbert, the first and purest of our English freethinkers, who flourished in the beginning of the reign of Charles the First, did not so much impugn the doctrine or the morality of the Scriptures, as attempt to supersede their necessity, by endeavoring to show that the great principles of the unity of God, a moral government, and a future world, are taught with sufficient clearness by the light of nature. Bolingbroke, and some of his successors, advanced much farther, and attempted to invalidate the proofs of the moral character of the Deity, and consequently all expectations of rewards and punishments; leaving the Supreme Being no other perfections than those which belong to a first cause, or almighty contriver. After him at a considerable distance, followed Hume, the most subtle, if not the most philosophical, of the Deists; who, by perplexing the relations of cause and effect, boldly aimed to introduce a universal skepticism, and to pour more than Egyptian darkness into the whole region of morals. Since his time skeptical writers have sprung up in abundance, and infidelity has allured multitudes to its standard; the young and superficial by its dexterous sophistry, the vain by the literary fame of its champions, and the profligate by the licentiousness of its principles. Atheism the most undisguised has at length begun to make its appearance.

Animated by numbers and imboldened by success, the infidels of the present day have given a new direction to their efforts, and impressed a new character on the ever growing mass of their impious speculations.

By uniting more closely with each other, by giving a sprinkling of irreligion to all their literary productions, they aim to engross the formation of the public mind: and amid the warmest professions of attachment to virtue, to effect an entire disruption of morality from religion. Pretending to be the teachers of virtue and the guides of life, they propose to revolutionize the morals of mankind; to regenerate the world by a process entirely new; and to rear the temple of virtue, not merely without the aid of religion, but on the renunciation of its principles, and the derision of its sanctions. Their party has derived a great accession of numbers and strength from events the most momentous and astonishing in the political world, which have divided the sentiments of Europe between hope and terror; and which, however they may issue, have, for the present, swelled the ranks of infidelity.

So rapidly, indeed, has it advanced since this crisis, that a great majority on the Continent, and in England a considerable proportion of those who pursue literature as a profession,* may justly be considered as the open or undisguised abettors of atheism.

With respect to the skeptical and religious systems, the inquiry at present is not so much which is the truest in speculation, as which is the most useful in practice; or, in other words, whether morality will be best promoted by considering it as a part of a great and comprehensive law, emanating from the will of a supreme, omnipotent legislator; or as a mere expedient, adapted to our present situation, enforced by no other motives than those which arise from the prospects and interests of the present state. The absurdity of atheism having been demonstrated so often and so clearly by many eminent men, that this part of the subject is exhausted, I should hasten immediately to what I have particularly in view, were I not apprehensive a discourse of this kind may be expected to contain some statement of the argument in proof of a Deity; which, therefore, I shall present in as few and plain words as possible.

When we examine a watch, or any other piece of machinery, we instantly perceive marks of design. The arrangement of its several parts, and the adaptation of its movements to one result, show it to be a contrivance; nor do we ever imagine the faculty of contriving to be in the watch itself, but in a separate agent. If we turn from art to nature, we behold a vast magazine of contrivances; we see innumerable objects replete with the most exquisite design. The human eye, for example, is formed with admirable skill for the purpose of sight, the ear for the function of hearing. As in the productions of art we never think of ascribing the power of contrivance to the machine itself, so we are certain the skill displayed in the human structure is not a property of man, since he is very imperfectly acquainted with his own formation. If there be an inseparable relation between the ideas of a contrivance and a contriver, and it be evident, in regard to the human structure, the designing agent is not man himself, there must undeniably be some separate invisible being, who is his former. This great Being we mean to indicate by the appellation of Deity.

This reasoning admits but of one reply. Why, it will be said, may we not suppose the world has always continued as it is; that is, that there has been a constant succession of finite beings, appearing and disappearing on the earth from all eternity? I answer, whatever is supposed to have occasioned this constant succession, exclusive of an intelligent cause, will never account for the undeniable marks of design visible in all finite beings. Nor is the absurdity of supposing a contrivance without a contriver diminished by this imaginary succession; but rather, increased, by being repeated at every step of the series.

Besides, an eternal succession of finite beings involves in it a contradiction, and is therefore plainly impossible. As the supposition is made to get quit of the idea of any one having existed from eternity, each of the beings in the succession must have begun in time: but the succession of beings infinitely earlier than any being in the succession; or, in other words, a series of beings running on, *ad infinitum*, before it reached any particular being, which is absurd.

From these considerations it is manifest there must be some eternal Being, or nothing could ever have existed; and since the beings which we behold bear in their whole structure evident marks of wisdom and design, it is equally certain that he who formed them is a wise and intelligent agent.

To prove the unity of this great Being, in opposition to a plurality of gods, it is not necessary to have recourse to metaphysical abstractions. It is sufficient to observe, that the notion of a more than one author of nature is inconsistent with that harmony of design which pervades her works; that it explains no appearances, is supported by no evidence, and serves no purpose, but to embarrass and perplex our conceptions.

Such are the proofs of the existence of that great and glorious Being whom we denominate God; and it is not presumption to say, it is impossible to find another truth in the whole compass of morals which, according to the justest laws of reasoning, admits of such strict and rigorous demonstration.

But I proceed to the more immediate object of this discourse, which, as has been already intimated, is not so much to evince the falsehood of skepticism as a theory, as to display its mischievous effects, contrasted with those which result from the belief of a Deity and a future state. The subject, viewed in this light, may be considered under two aspects; the influence of the opposite systems on the principles of morals and on the formation of character. The first may be styled their direct, the latter their equally important, but indirect, consequence and tendency.

I. The skeptical or irreligious system subverts the whole foundation of morals.

* By those who pursue literature as a profession, the author would be understood to mean that numerous class of literary men who draw their principal subsistence from their writings.

It may be assumed as a maxim, that no person can be required to act contrary to his greatest good, or his highest interest, comprehensively viewed in relation to the whole duration of his being. It is often our duty to forego our own interest *partially*, to sacrifice a smaller pleasure for the sake of a greater, to incur a present evil in pursuit of a distant good of more consequence. In a word, to arbitrate among interfering claims of inclination is the moral arithmetic of human life. But to risk the happiness of the whole duration of our being in any case whatever, were it possible, would be foolish; because the sacrifice must, by the nature of it, be so great as to preclude the possibility of compensation.

As the present world, on skeptical principles, is the only place of recompense, whenever the practice of virtue fails to promise the greatest sum of present good,—cases which often occur in reality, and much oftener in appearance,—every motive to virtuous conduct is superseded; a deviation from rectitude becomes the part of wisdom; and should the path of virtue, in addition to this, be obstructed by disgrace, torment, or death, to persevere would be madness and folly, and a violation of the first and most essential law of nature. Virtue, on these principles, being in numberless instances at war with self-preservation, never can, or ought to become, a fixed habit of mind.

The system of infidelity is not only incapable of arming virtue for great and trying occasions, but leaves it unsupported in the most ordinary occurrences. In vain will its advocates appeal to a moral sense, to benevolence and sympathy; for it is undeniable that these impulses may be overcome. In vain will they expatiate on the tranquility and pleasure attendant on a virtuous course: for though you may remind the offender that in disregarding them he has violated his nature, and that a conduct consistent with them is productive of much internal satisfaction; yet if he reply that his taste is of a different sort, that there are other gratifications which he values more, and that every man must choose his own pleasures, the argument is at an end.

Rewards and punishments, assigned by infinite power, afford a palpable and pressing motive which can never be neglected without renouncing the character of rational creatures: but tastes and relishes are not to be prescribed.

A motive in which the reason of man shall acquiesce, enforcing the practice of virtue at all times and seasons, enters into the very essence of moral obligation. Modern infidelity supplies no such motives: it is therefore essentially and infallibly a system of enervation, turpitude, and vice.

This chasm in the construction of morals can only be supplied by the firm belief of a rewarding and avenging Deity, who binds duty and happiness, though they may seem distant, in an indissoluble chain; without which, whatever usurps the name of virtue is not a principle, but a feeling; not a determinate rule, but a fluctuating expedient, varying with the tastes of individuals, and changing with the scenes of life.

Nor is this the only way in which infidelity subverts the foundation of morals. All reasoning on morals presupposes a distinction between inclinations and duties, affections and rules. The former supply motives to action; the latter regulate and control it. Hence it is evident, if virtue have any just claim to authority, it must be under the latter of these notions; that is under the character of a law. It is under this notion, *in fact*, that its dominion has ever been acknowledged to be paramount and supreme.

But without the intervention of a superior will, it is impossible there should be any moral laws, except in the lax metaphorical sense in which we speak of the laws of matter and motion. Men being essentially equal, morality is, on these principles, only a stipulation, or silent compact, into which every individual is supposed to enter, as far as suits his convenience, and for the breach of which he is accountable to nothing but his own mind. His own mind is his law, his tribunal, and his judge!

Two consequences, the most disastrous to society, will inevitably follow the general prevalence of this system;—the frequent perpetration of great crimes, and the total absence of great virtues.

1. In those conjectures which tempt avarice or inflame ambition, when a crime flatters with the prospect of impunity, and the certainty of immense advantage, what is to restrain an atheist from its commission? To say that remorse will deter him is absurd; for remorse, as distinguished from piety, is the sole offspring of religious belief, the extinction of which is the great purpose of the infidel philosophy.

The dread of punishment or infamy from his fellow-creatures will be an equally ineffectual barrier; because crimes are only committed under such circumstances as suggest the hope of concealment: not to say that crimes themselves will soon lose their infamy and their horror under the influence of that system which destroys the sanctity of virtue, by converting it into a low calculation of worldly interest. Here the sense of an ever-present Ruler, and of an avenging Judge, is of the most awful and indispensable necessity; as it is that alone which impresses on all crimes the character of *folly*, shows that duty and interest in every instance coincide, and that the most prosperous career of vice, the most brilliant

successes of criminality, are but an *accumulation of wrath against the day of wrath.*

As the frequent perpetration of great crimes is an inevitable consequence of the diffusion of skeptical principles, so, to understand this consequence in its full extent, we must look beyond their immediate effects, and consider the disruption of social ties, the destruction of confidence, the terror, suspicion, and hatred which must prevail in that state of society in which barbarous deeds are familiar. The tranquillity which pervades a well-ordered community, and the mutual good offices which bind its members together, are founded on an implied confidence in the indisposition to annoy; in the justice, humanity, and moderation of those among whom we dwell. So that the worst consequence of crimes is, that they impair the stock of public charity and general tenderness. The dread and hatred of our species would infallibly be grafted on a conviction that we were exposed every moment to the surges of an unbridled ferocity, and that nothing but the power of the magistrate stood between us and the daggers of assassins. In such a state, laws, deriving no support from public manners, are unequal to the task of curbing the fury of the passions; which, from being concentrated into selfishness, fear, and revenge, acquire new force. Terror and suspicion beget cruelty, and inflict injuries by way of prevention. Pity is extinguished in the stronger impulse of self-preservotion. The tender and generous affections are crushed; and nothing is seen but the retaliation of wrongs, the fierce and unmitigated struggle for superiority. This is but a faint sketch of the incalculable calamities and horrors we must expect, should we be so unfortunate as ever to witness the triumph of modern infidelity.

2. This system is a soil as barren of great and sublime virtues as it is prolific in crimes. By great and sublime virtues are meant those which are called into action on great and trying occasions, which demand the sacrifice of the dearest interests and prospects of human life, and sometimes of life itself: the virtues, in a word, which, by their rarity and splendour, draw admiration, and have rendered illustrious the character of patriots, martyrs, and confessors. It requires but little reflection to perceive, that whatever veils a future world, and contracts the limits of existence within the present life, must tend, in a proportionable degree, to diminish the grandeur and narrow the sphere of human agency.

As well might you expect exalted sentiments of justice from a professed gamester, as look for noble principles in the man whose hopes and fears are all suspended on the present moment, and who stakes the whole happiness of his being on the events of this vain and fleeting life. If he be ever impelled to the performance of great achievements in a good cause, it must be solely by the hope of fame; a motive which, besides that it makes virtue the servant of opinion, usually grows weaker at the approach of death; and which, however it may surmount the love of existence in the heat of battle, or in the moment of public observation, can seldom be expected to operate with much force on the retired duties of a private station.

In affirming that infidelity is unfavorable to the higher class of virtues, we are supported as well by facts as by reasoning. We should be sorry to load our adversaries with unmerited reproach: but to what history, to what record will they appeal for the traits of moral greatness exhibited by their disciples? Where shall we look for the trophies of infidel magnanimity or atheistical virtue? Not that we mean to accuse them of inactivity: they have recently filled the world with the fame of their exploits; exploits of a different kind indeed, but of imperishable memory, and disastrous lustre.

Though it is confessed great and splendid actions are not the ordinary employment of life, but must, from their nature, be reserved for high and eminent occasions; yet that system is essentially defective which leaves no room for their production. They are important, both from their immediate advantage and their remoter influence. They often save, and always illustrate, the age and nation in which they appear.—They raise the standard of morals; they arrest the progress of degeneracy; they diffuse a lustre over the path of life: monuments of the greatness of the human soul, they present to the world the august image of virtue in her sublimest form, from which streams of light and glory issue to remote times and ages; while their commemoration by the pen of historians and poets awakens in distant bosoms the sparks of kindred excellence.

Combine the frequent and familiar perpetration of atrocious deeds with the dearth of great and generous actions, and you have the exact picture of that condition of society which completes the degradation of the species—the frightful contrast of dwarfish virtues and gigantic vices, where every thing good is mean and little, and every thing evil is rank and luxuriant: a dead and sickening uniformity prevails, broken only at intervals by volcanic eruptions of anarchy and crime.

II. Hitherto we have considered the influence of skepticism on the principles of virtue; and have endeavored to show that it despoils it of its dignity, and lays its authority in the dust. Its influence on the

formation of character remains to be examined. The actions of men are oftener determined by their character than their interest: their conduct takes its color more from their acquired taste, inclinations, and habits, than from a deliberate regard to their greatest good. It is only on great occasions the mind awakes to take an extended survey of her whole course, and that she suffers the dictates of reason to impress a new bias upon her movements. The actions of each day are, for the most part, links which follow each other in the chain of custom. Hence the great effort of practical wisdom is to imbue the mind with right tastes, affections, and habits; the elements of character, the masters of action.

1. The exclusion of a Supreme Being and of a superintending Providence tends directly to the destruction of moral taste. It robs the universe of all finished and consumate excellence even in idea. The admiration of perfect wisdom and goodness for which we are formed, and which kindles such unspeakable rapture in the soul, finding in the religions of skepticism nothing to which it corresponds, droops and languishes. In a world which presents a fair spectacle of order and beauty, of a vast family nourished and supported by an Almighty Parent,—in a world which leads the devout mind, step by step, to the contemplation of the first fair and the first good, the skeptic is encompassed with nothing but obscurity, meanness and disorder.

When we reflect on the manner in which the idea of Deity is formed, we must be convinced that such an idea, intimately present to the mind, must have a most powerful effect in refining the moral taste. Composed of the richest elements, it embraces, in the character of a benificent Parent and Almighty ruler, whatever is venerable in wisdom, whatever is awful in authority, whatever is touching in goodness.

Human excellence is blended with many imperfections, and seen under many limitations. It is beheld only in detached and separate portions, nor ever appears in any one character whole and entire. So that when, in imitation of the Stoics, we wish to form out of these fragments the notion of a perfectly wise and good man, we know it is a mere fiction of the mind, without any real being in whom it is imbodied and realized. In the belief of a Deity, these conceptions are reduced to reality: the scattered rays of an ideal excellence are concentrated, and become the real attributes of that Being with whom we stand in the nearest relation, who sits supreme at the head of the universe, is armed with infinite power, and pervades all nature with his presence.

The efficacy of these views in producing and augmenting a virtuous taste will indeed be proportioned to the vividness with which they are formed, and the frequency with which they recur; yet some benefit will not fail to result from them even in their lowest degree.

The idea of the Supreme Being has this peculiar property: that, as it admits of no substitute, so, from the first moment it is formed, it is capable of continual growth and enlargement. God himself is immutable; but our conception of his character is continually receiving fresh accessions, is continually growing more extended and refulgent, by having transferred to it new elements of beauty and goodness; by attracting to itself, as a centre, whatever bears the impress of dignity, order, or happiness. It borrows splendor from all that is far, subordinates to itself all that is great, and sits enthroned on the riches of the universe.

As the object of worship will always be, in a degree, the object of imitation, hence arises a fixed standard of moral excellence; by the contemplation of which the tendencies to corruption are counteracted, the contagion of bad example is checked, and human nature rises above its natural level.

When the knowledge of God was lost in the world, just ideas of virtue and moral obligation disappeared along with it. How is it to be otherwise accounted for, that in the polished nations, and in the enlightened times of pagan antiquity, the most unnatural lusts and detestable impurities were not only tolerated in private life,* but entered into religion, and formed a material part of public worship;† while among the Jews, a people so much inferior in every other branch of knowledge, the same vices were regarded with horror?

The reason is this; the true character of God was unknown to the former, which by the light of divine revelation was displayed

* It is worthy of observation, that the elegant and philosophic Xenophon, in delineating the model of a perfect prince in the character of Cyrus, introduces a Mede who had formed an unnatural passion for his hero; and relates the incident in a lively, festive humour, without being in the least conscious of any indelicacy attached to it. What must be the state of manners in a country where a circumstance of this kind, feigned, no doubt, by way of ornament, finds a place in such a work?—*Cyri Instit.* lib. i.

"Deide nobis, qui, *concedentibus philosophis antiquis* adolescentulis delectamur, etiam vitia sæpe jucunda sunt."—*Cicero De Nat. Dei*, lib. i.

† "——*Nam quo non prostat fœmina templo?*"—Juv.

The impurities practised in the worship of Esis, an Egyptian deity, rose to such a height in the reign of Tiberius, that that profligate prince thought fit to prohibit her worship, and at the same time inflicted on her priests the punishment of crucifixion.—*Joseph. Antiq. Judaic.* lib. xviii.

to the latter. The former cast their deities in the mould of their own imaginations; in consequence of which they partook of the vices and defects of their worshippers. To the latter, no scope was left for the wanderings of fancy; but a pure and perfect model was prescribed.

False and corrupt, however, as was the religion of pagans (if it deserve the name,) and defective, and often vicious, as was the character of their imaginary deities, it was still better for the world that the void should be filled with these than abandoned to a total skepticism; for if both systems are equally false, they are not equally pernicious. When the fictions of heathenism consecrated the memory of its legislators and heroes, it invested them for the most part with those qualities which were in the greatest repute. They were supposed to possess in the highest degree the virtues in which it was most honorable to excel; and to be the witnesses, approvers, and patrons of those perfections in others by which their own character was chiefly distinguished. Men saw, or rather fancied they saw, in these supposed deities the qualities they most admired, dilated to a larger size, moving in a higher sphere, and associated with the power, dignity, and happiness of superior natures. With such ideal models before them, and conceiving themselves continually acting under the eye of such spectators and judges, they felt a real elevation; their eloquence became more impassioned, their patriotism inflamed, and their courage exalted.

Revelation, by displaying the true character of God, affords a pure and perfect standard of virtue; heathenism one in many respects defective and vicious; the fashionable skepticism of the present day, which excludes the belief of all superior powers, affords no standard at all. Human nature knows nothing better or higher than itself. All above and around it being shrouded in darkness, and the prospect confined to the tame realities of life, virtue has no room upwards to expand; nor are any excursions permitted into that unseen world, the true element of the great and good, by which it is fortified with motives equally calculated to satisfy the reason, to delight the fancy, and to impress the heart.

2. Modern infidelity not only tends to corrupt the moral taste, it also promotes the growth of those vices which are most hostile to social happiness. Of all the vices incident to human nature, the most destructive to society are vanity, ferocity, and unbridled sensuality; and these are precisely the vices which infidelity is calculated to cherish.

That the love, fear, and habitual contemplation of a Being infinitely exalted, or, in other words, devotion, is adapted to promote a sober and moderate estimate of our own excellencies, is incontestible; nor is it less evident that the exclusion of such sentiments must be favorable to pride. The criminality of pride will, perhaps, be less readily admitted: for though there is no vice so opposite to the spirit of Christianity, yet there is none which, even in the Christian world, has, under various pretences, been treated with so much indulgence.

There is, it will be confessed, a delicate sensibility to character, a sober desire of reputation, a wish to possess the esteem of the wise and good, felt by the purest minds, which is at the farthest remove from arrogance or vanity. The humility of a noble mind scarcely dares to approve of itself, until it has secured the approbation of others. Very different is that restless desire of distinction, that passion for theatrical display, which inflames the heart and occupies the whole attention of vain men. This, of all the passions, is the most unsocial, avarice itself not excepted. The reason is plain. Property is a kind of good which may be more easily attained, and is capable of more minute subdivisions than fame. In the pursuit of wealth, men are led by an attention to their own interest to promote the welfare of each other: their advantages is reciprocal; the benefits which each is anxious to acquire for himself he reaps in the greatest abundance from the union and conjunction of society. The pursuits of vanity are quite contrary. The portion of time and attention mankind are willing to spare from their avocations and pleasures to devote to the admiration of each other is so small, that every successful adventurer is felt to have impaired the common stock. The success of one is the disappointment of multitudes. For though there be many rich, many virtuous, many wise men, fame must necessarily be the portion of but few. Hence every vain man, every man in whom vanity is the ruling passion, regarding his rival as his enemy, is strongly tempted to rejoice in his miscarriage, and repine at his success.

Besides, as the passions are seldom seen in a simple, unmixed state, so vanity, when it succeeds degenerates into arrogance; when it is disappointed (and it is often disappointed,) it is exasperated into malignity, and corrupted into envy. In this stage the vain man commences a determined misanthropist. He detests that excellence which he cannot reach. He detests his species, and longs to be revenged for the unpardonable injustice he has sustained in their insensibility to his merits. He lives upon the calamities of the world; the vices and miseries of men are his element and his food. Virtues, talents, and genius are his natural enemies, which he persecutes with instinc-

tive eagerness and unrelenting hostility. There are who doubt the existence of such a disposition; but it certainly issues out of the dregs of disappointed vanity: a disease which taints and vitiates the whole character wherever it prevails. It forms the heart to such a profound indifference to the welfare of others, that, whatever appearances he may assume, or however wide the circle of his seeming virtues may extend, you will infallibly find the vain man is his own centre. Attentive only to himself, absorbed in the contemplation of his own perfections, instead of feeling tenderness for his fellow creatures as members of the same family, as beings with whom he is appointed to act, to suffer, and to sympathize,—he considers life as a stage on which he is performing a part, and mankind in no other light than spectators. Whether he smiles or frowns, whether his path is adorned with the rays of benificence, or his steps are dyed in blood, an attention to self is the spring of every movement, and the motive to which every action is referred.

His apparent good qualities lose all their worth, by losing all that is simple, genuine, and natural: they are even pressed into the service of vanity, and become the means of enlarging its power. The truly good man is jealous over himself lest the notoriety of his best actions, by blending itself with their motive, should diminish their value; the vain man performs the same actions for the sake of that notoriety. The good man quietly discharges his duty, and shuns ostentation; the vain man considers every good deed lost that is not publicly displayed. The one is intent upon realities, the other upon semblances: the one aims to *be* virtuous, the other to *appear* so.

Nor is a mind inflated with vanity more disqualified for right action than just speculation, or better disposed to the pursuit of truth than the practice of virtue. To such a mind the simplicity of truth is disgusting. Careless of the improvement of mankind, and intent only upon astonishing with the appearance of novelty, the glare of paradox will be preferred to the light of truth; opinions will be embraced, not because they are just, but because they are new: the more flagitious, the more subversive of morals, the more alarming to the wise and good, the more welcome to men who estimate their literary powers by the mischief they produce, and who consider the anxiety and terror they impress as the measure of their renown. Truth is simple and uniform, while error may be infinitely varied: and as it is one thing to start paradoxes, and another to make discoveries, we need the less wonder at the prodigious increase of modern philosophers.

We have been so much accustomed to consider extravagant self-estimation merely as a ridiculous quality, that many will be surprised to find it treated as a vice pregnant with serious mischief to society. But, to form a judgment of its influence on the manners and happiness of a nation, it is necessary only to look at its effects in a family; for bodies of men are only collections of individuals, and the greatest nation is nothing more than an aggregate of a number of families. Conceive of a domestic circle, in which each member is elated with a most extravagant opinion of himself, and a proportionable contempt of every other; is full of little contrivances to catch applause, and whenever he is not praised is sullen and dissapointed. What a picture of disunion, disgust, and animosity would such a family present! How utterly would domestic affection be extinguished, and all the purposes of domestic society be defeated! The general prevalence of such dispositions must be accompanied by an equal proportion of general misery. The tendency of pride to produce strife and hatred is sufficiently apparent from the pains men have been at to construct a system of politeness, which is nothing more than a sort of mimic humility, in which the sentiments of an offensive self-estimation are so far disguised and suppressed as to make them compatible with the spirit of society; such a mode of behaviour as would naturally result from an attention to the apostolic injunction: *Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but, in lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than themselves.* But if the semblance be of such importance, how much more useful the reality! If the mere garb of humility be of such indispensable necessity that without it society could not subsist, how much better still would the harmony of the world be preserved, were the condescension, deference, and respect so studiously displayed a true picture of the heart!

The same restless and eager vanity which disturbs a family, when it is permitted in a great national crisis to mingle with political affairs, distracts a kingdom; infusing into those intrusted with the enaction of laws a spirit of rash innovation and daring empiricism, a disdain of the established usages of mankind, a foolish desire to dazzle the world with new and untried systems of policy, in which the precedents of antiquity and the experience of ages are only consulted to be trodden under foot; and into the executive department of government, a fierce contention for pre-eminence, an incessant struggle to supplant and destroy, with a propensity to calumny and suspicion, proscription and massacre.

We shall suffer the most eventful season ever witnessed in the affairs of men to pass over our heads to very little purpose, if we

fail to learn from it some awful lessons on the nature and progress of the passions.—The true light in which the French revolution ought to be contemplated is that of a grand experiment on human nature.—Among the various passions which that revolution has so strikingly displayed, none is more conspicuous than vanity; nor is it less difficult, without adverting to the national character of the people, to account for its extraordinary predominance. Political power, the most seducing object of ambition, never before circulated through so many hands; the prospect of possessing it was never before presented to so many minds. Multitudes, who by their birth and education, and not unfrequently by their talents, seemed destined to perpetual obscurity, were by the alternate rise and fall of parties elevated into distinction, and shared in the functions of government. The short-lived forms of power and office glided with such rapidity through successive ranks of degradation, from the court to the very dregs of the populace, that they seemed rather to solicit acceptance than to be a prize contended for.* Yet, as it was still impossible for all to possess authority, though none were willing to obey, a general impatience to break the ranks and rush into the foremost ground maddened and infuriated the nation, and overwhelmed law, order, and civilization, with the violence of a torrent.

If such be the mischiefs both in public and private life resulting from an excessive self-estimation, it remains next to be considered whether Providence has supplied any medicine to correct it; for as the reflection on excellences, whether real or imaginary, is always attended with pleasure to the possessor, it is a disease deeply seated in our nature.

Suppose there were a great and glorious Being always present with us, who had given us existence, with numberless other blessings, and on whom we depended each instant, as well for every present enjoyment as for every future good; suppose, again, we had incurred the just displeasure of such a Being by ingratitude and disobedience, yet that in great mercy he had not cast us off, but had assured us he was willing to pardon and restore us on our humble entreaty and sincere repentance; say, would not an habitual sense of the presence of this Being, self-reproach for having displeased him, and an anxiety to recover his favor, be the most effectual antidote to pride? But such are the leading discoveries made by the Christian revelation, and such the dispositions which a practical belief of it inspires.

Humility is the first fruit of religion. In the mouth of our Lord there is no maxim so frequent as the following: *Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*—Religion, and that alone, teaches *absolute* humility; by which I mean a sense of our *absolute* nothingness in the view of infinite greatness and excellence. That sense of inferiority which results from the comparison of men with each other is often an unwelcome sentiment forced upon the mind, which may rather imbitter the temper than soften it: that which devotion impresses is soothing and delightful. The devout man loves to lie low at the footstool of his Creator, because it is then he attains the most lively perceptions of the divine excellence, and the most tranquil confidence in the divine favor. In so august a presence he sees all distinctions lost, and all beings reduced to the same level. He looks at his superiors without envy, and his inferiors without contempt: and when from this elevation he descends to mix in society, the conviction of superiority which must in many instances be felt is a calm inference of the understanding, and no longer a busy, importunate passion of the heart.

The wicked (says the Psalmist) *through the pride of their countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all their thoughts.* When we consider the incredible vanity of the atheistical sect, together with the settled malignity and unrelenting rancour with which they pursue every vestige of religion, is it uncandid to suppose that its humbling tendency is one principal cause of their enmity; that they are eager to displace a Deity from the minds of men, that they may occupy the void; to crumble the throne of the Eternal into dust, that they may elevate themselves on its ruins; and that, as their licentiousness is impatient of restraint, so their pride disdains a superior?

We mentioned a ferocity of character as one effect of skeptical impiety. It is an inconvenience attending a controversy with those with whom we have few principles in common, that we are often in danger of reasoning inconclusively, for the want of its being clearly known and settled what our opponents admit, and what they deny.—The persons, for example, with whom we are at present engaged have discarded humility and modesty from the catalogue of virtues; on which account we have employed the more time in evincing their importance: but whatever may be thought of humility as a *virtue*, it surely will not be denied that inhumanity is a most detestable *vice;* a vice, however, which skepticism has a most powerful tendency to inflame.

As we have already shown that pride hardens the heart, and that religion is the

* ——"Æquo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas Regumque turres."—*Hor.*

only effectual antidote, the connexion between irreligion and inhumanity is in this view obvious. But there is another light in which this part of the subject may be viewed, in my humble opinion, much more important, though seldom adverted to.—The supposition that man is a moral and accountable being, destined to survive the stroke of death, and to live in a future world in a never-ending state of happiness or misery, makes him a creature of incomparably more *consequence* than the opposite supposition. When we consider him as placed here by an Almighty Ruler in a state of probation, and that the present life is his period of trial, the first link in a vast and interminable chain which stretches into eternity, he assumes a dignified character in our eyes. Every thing which relates to him becomes interesting; and to trifle with his happiness is felt to be the most unpardonable levity. If such be the destination of man, it is evident that in the qualities which fit him for it his principal dignity consists: his moral greatness is his true greatness. Let the skeptical principles be admitted, which represent him, on the contrary, as the offspring of chance, connected with no superior power, and sinking into annihilation at death, and he is a contemptible creature, whose existence and happiness are insignificant. The characteristic difference is lost between him and the brute creation, from which he is no longer distinguished, except by the vividness and multiplicity of his perceptions.

If we reflect on that part of our nature which disposes us to humanity, we shall find, that where we have no particular attachment our sympathy with the sufferings and concern for the destruction of sensitive beings are in proportion to their supposed importance in the general scale; or, in other words, to their supposed capacity of enjoyment. We feel, for example, much more at witnessing the destruction of a man than of an inferior animal, because we consider it as involving the extinction of a much greater sum of happiness. For the same reason he who would shudder at the slaughter of a large animal will see a thousand insects perish without a pang. Our sympathy with the calamities of our fellow-creatures is adjusted to the same proportions; for we feel more powerfully affected with the distresses of fallen greatness than with equal or greater distresses sustained by persons of inferior rank; because, having been accustomed to associate with an elevated station the idea of superior happiness, the loss appears the greater, and the wreck more extensive. But the disproportion in importance between man and the meanest insect is not so great as that which subsists between man considered as *mortal* and as *immortal;* that is, between man as he is represented by the system of skepticism, and that of divine revelation; for the enjoyment of the meanest insect bears some proportion, though a very small one, to the present happiness of man; but the happiness of time bears none at all to that of eternity. The skeptical system, therefore, sinks the importance of human existence to an inconceivable degree.

From these principles results the following important inference—that to extinguish human life by the hand of violence must be quite a different thing in the eyes of a skeptic from what it is in those of a Chritian.—With the skeptic it is nothing more than diverting the course of a little red fluid, called blood; it is merely lessening the number by one of many millions of fugitive contemptible creatures. The Christian sees in the same event an accountable being cut off from a state of probation, and hurried, perhaps unprepared, into the presence of his Judge, to hear that final, that irrevocable sentence, which is to fix him for ever in an unalterable condition of felicity or wo. The former perceives in death nothing but its physical circumstances; the latter is impressed with the magnitude of its moral consequences. It is the moral relation which man is supposed to bear to a superior power, the awful idea of accountability, the influence which his present dispositions and actions are conceived to have upon his eternal destiny, more than any superiority of intellectual powers abstracted from these considerations, which invest him with such mysterious grandeur, and constitute the firmest guard on the sanctuary of human life. This reasoning, it is true, serves more *immediately* to show how the disbelief of a future state endangers the security of life; but though this be its *direct* consequence, it extends by analogy much further, since he who has learned to sport with the *lives* of his fellow-creatures will feel but little solicitude for their welfare in any other instance; but, as the greater includes the less, will easily pass from this to all the inferior gradations of barbarity.

As the advantage of the armed over the unarmed is not seen till the moment of attack, so in that tranquil state of society in which law and order maintain their ascendency, it is not permitted, perhaps not even suspected, to what an alarming degree the principles of modern infidelity leave us naked and defenceless. But let the state be convulsed, let the mounds of regular authority be once overflowed, and the still small voice of law drowned in the tempest of popular fury (events which recent experience shows to be possible,) it will then be seen that atheism is a school of ferocity; and that, having taught its disciples to con-

sider mankind as little better than a nest of insects, they will be prepared in the fierce conflicts of party to trample upon them without pity, and extinguish them without remorse.

It was late before the atheism of Epicures gained footing at Rome; but its prevalence was soon followed by such scenes of proscription, confiscation, and blood, as were *then* unparalleled in the history o the world; from which the republic being never able to recover itself, after many unsuccessful struggles, exchanged liberty for repose, by submission to absolute power. Such were the effects of atheism at Rome. An attempt has been recently made to establish a similar system in France, the consequences of which are too well known to render it requisite for me to shock your feelings by a recital. The only doubt that can arise is, whether the barbarities which have stained the revolution in that unhappy country are justly chargeable on the prevalence of atheism. Let those who doubt of this recollect that the men who, by their activity and talents, prepared the minds of the people for that great change—*Voltaire*, *D'Alembert*, *Diderot*, *Rousseau*, and others—were avowed enemies of revelation; that in all their writings the diffusion of skepticism and revolutionary principles went hand in hand; that the fury of the most sanguinary parties was especially pointed against the Christian priesthood and religious institutions, without once pretending, like other persecutors, to execute the vengeance of God (whose name they never mentioned) upon his enemies; that their atrocities were committed with a wanton levity and brutal merriment; that the reign of atheism was avowedly and expressly the reign of terror; that in the full madness of their career, in the highest climax of their horrors, they shut up the temples of God, abolished his worship, and proclaimed death to be an eternal sleep; as if by pointing to the silence of the sepulchre, and the sleep of the dead, these ferocious barbarians meant to apologize for leaving neither sleep, quiet, nor repose to the living.

As the heathens fabled that Minerva issued full armed from the head of Jupiter, so no sooner were the speculations of atheistical philosophy matured, than they gave birth to a ferocity which converted the most polished people in Europe into a horde of assassins; the seat of voluptuous refinement, of pleasure, and of arts, into a theatre of blood.

Having already shown that the principles of infidelity facilitate the commission of crimes, by removing the restraints of fear; and that they foster the arrogance of the individual, while they inculcate the most despicable opinion of the species; the inevitable result is, that a haughty self-confidence, a contempt of mankind, together with a daring defiance of religious restraints, are the natural ingredients of the atheistical character; nor is it less evident that these are, of all others, the dispositions which most forcibly stimulate to violence and cruelty.

Settle it therefore in your minds, as a maxim never to be effaced or forgotten, that atheism is an inhuman, bloody, ferocious system, equally hostile to every useful restraint and to every virtuous affection; that, leaving nothing above us to excite awe, nor round us to awaken tenderness, it wages war with heaven and with earth: its first object is to dethrone God, its next to destroy man.*

There is a third vice, not less destructive to society than either of those which have been already mentioned, to which the system of modern infidelity is favourable; that is, unbridled sensuality, the licentious and unrestrained indulgence of those passions which are essential to the continuation of the species. The magnitude of these passions, and their supreme importance to the existence as well as the peace and welfare of society, have rendered it one of the first objects of solicitude with every wise legislator to restrain them by such laws, and to confine their indulgence within such limits, as shall best promote the great ends for which they were implanted.

The benevolence and wisdom of the Author of Christianity are eminently conspicuous in the laws he has enacted on this branch of morals; for, while he authorizes marriage, he restrains the vagrancy and caprice of the passions, by forbidding polygamy and divorce; and, well knowing that offences against the laws of chastity usually spring from an ill-regulated imagination, he inculcates purity of heart.—Among innumerable benefits which the world has derived from the Christian religion, a superior refinement in the sexual sentiments, a more equal and respective treatment of women, greater dignity and permanence conferred on the institution of marriage, are not the least considerable; in consequence of which the purest affections and the most sacred duties are grafted on the stock of the strongest insects.

* As human nature is the same in all ages, it is not surprising to find the same moral systems, even in the most dissimilar circumstances, produce corresponding effects. Josephus remarks that the Sadduces, a kind of Jewish infidels, whose tenets were the denial of a moral government and a future state, were distinguished from the other sects by their ferocity.—*De Bell. Jud.* lib. ii. He elsewhere remarks, that they were eminent for their inhumanity in their judicial capacity.

The aims of all the leading champions of infidelity is to rob mankind of these benefits, and throw them back into a state of gross and brutal sensuality. In this spirit, Mr. Hume represents the private conduct of the profligate Charles, whose debaucheries polluted the age, as a just subject of panegyric. A disciple in the same school has lately had the unblushing effrontery to stigmatize marriage as the worst of all monopolies; and, in a narrative of his licentious amours, to make a formal apology for departing from his principles, by submitting to its restraints. The popular productions on the Continent which issue from the atheistical school are incessantly directed to the same purpose.

Under every possible aspect in which infidelity can be viewed, it extends the dominion of sensuality: it repeals and abrogates every law by which divine revelation has, under such awful sanctions, restrained the indulgence of the passions. The disbelief of a supreme, omniscient Being, which it inculcates, releases its disciples from an attention to the *heart*, from every care but the preservation of outward decorum; and the exclusion of the devout affections and an unseen world leaves the mind immersed in visible, sensible objects.

There are two sorts of pleasures,—corporeal and mental. Though we are indebted to the senses for all our perceptions *originally*, yet those which are at the farthest remove from their *immediate impressions* confer the most elevation on the character, since in proportion as they multiplied and augmented, the slavish subjection to the senses is subdued. Hence the true and only antidote to debasing sensuality is the possession of a fund of that *kind of enjoyment* which is independent of the corporeal appetites. Inferior in the perfection of several of his senses to different parts of the brute creation, the superiority of man over them all consists in his superior power of multiplying by new combinations his mental perceptions, and thereby of creating to himself resources of happiness separate from external sensation. In the scale of enjoyment, at the first remove from sense are the pleasures of reason and society; at the next are the pleasures of devotion and religion. The former, though totally distinct from those of sense, are yet less perfectly adapted to moderate their excesses than the last, as they are in a great measure conversant with visible and sensible objects.—The religious affections and sentiments are, in fact, and were intended to be, the *proper antagonist* of sensuality,—the great deliverer from the thraldom of the appetites, by opening a spiritual world, and inspiring hopes and fears, and consolations and joys, which bear no relation to the material and sensible universe. The criminal indulgence of sensual passions admits but of two modes of prevention; the establishment of such laws and maxims in society as shall render lewd profligacy impracticable or infamous, or the infusion of such principles and habits as shall render it distasteful. Human legislatures have encountered the disease in the first, the truths and sanctions of revealed religion in the last of these methods: to both of which the advocates of modern infidelity are equally hostile.

So much has been said by many able writers to evince the inconceivable benefit of the marriage institution, that to hear it seriously attacked by men who style themselves philosophers, at the close of the eighteenth century, must awaken indignation and surprise. The object of this discourse leads us to direct our attention particularly to the influence of this institution on the *civilization* of the world.

From the records of revelation we learn that marriage, or the *permanent union* of the sexes, was ordained by God, and existed, under different modifications, in the early infancy of mankind; without which they could never have emerged from barbarism. For, conceive only what eternal discord, jealousy, and violence would ensue, were the objects of the tenderest affections secured to their possessor by no law or tie of moral obligation: were domestic enjoyments disturbed by incessant fear, and licentiousness inflamed by hope. Who could find sufficient tranquility of mind to enable him to plan or execute any continued scheme of action, or what room for arts or sciences, or religion, or virtue, in that state in which the chief earthly happiness was exposed to every lawless invader; where one was racked with an incessant anxiety to keep what the other was equally eager to acquire? It is not probable in itself, independent of the light of scripture, that the benevolent Author of the human race ever placed them in so wretched a condition at first; it is certain they could not remain in it long without being exterminated. Marriage, by shutting out these evils, and enabling every man to rest secure in his enjoyments, is the great civilizer of the world: with this security the mind is at liberty to expand in generous affections, and has leisure to look abroad, and engage in the pursuits of knowledge, science, and virtue.

Nor is it in this way only that marriage institutions are essential to the welfare of mankind. They are sources of tenderness, as well as the guardians of peace. Without the permanent union of the sexes there can be no permanent families: the dissolution of nuptial ties involves the dissolution of domestic society. But domestic society

is the seminary of social affections, the cradle of sensibility, where the first elements are acquired of that tenderness and humanity which cement mankind together; and were they entirely extinguished, the whole fabric of social institutions would be dissolved.

Families are so many centres of attraction, which preserve mankind from being scattered and dissipated by the repulsive powers of selfishness. The order of nature is evermore from particulars to generals. As in the operations of intellect we proceed from the contemplation of individuals to the formation of general abstractions, so in the developement of the passions, in like manner, we advance from private to public affections; from the love of parents, brothers, and sisters, to those more expanded regards which embrace the immense society of human kind.

In order to render men benevolent, they must first be made tender: for benevolent affections are not the offspring of reasoning: they result from that culture of the heart, from those early impressions of tenderness, gratitude, and sympathy, which the endearments of domestic life are sure to supply, and for the formation of which it is the best possible school.

The advocates of infidelity invert this eternal order of nature. Instead of inculcating the private affections, as a discipline by which the mind is prepared for those of a more public nature, they set them in direct opposition to each other, they propose to build general benevolence on the destruction of individual tenderness, and to make us love the whole species more by loving every particular part of it less. In pursuit of this chimerical project, gratitude, humility, conjugal, parental, and filial affection, together with every other social disposition, are reprobated—virtue is limited to a passionate attachment to the general good. Is it not natural to ask, when all the tenderness of life is extinguished, and all the bands of society are untwisted, from whence this ardent affection for the general good is to spring?

When this savage philosophy has completed its work, when it has taught its disciple to look with perfect indifference on the offspring of his body and the wife of his bosom, to estrange himself from his friends, insult his benefactors, and silence the pleadings of gratitude and pity; will he, by thus divesting himself of all that is human, be better prepared for the disinterested love of his species? Will he become a philanthropist only because he has ceased to be a man? Rather, in this total exemption from all the feelings which humanize and soften, in this chilling frost of universal indifference, may we not be certain that selfishness unmingled and uncontrolled will assume the empire of his heart; and that under pretence of advancing the general good, an object to which the fancy may give innumerable shapes, he will be prepared for the violation of every duty, and the perpetration of every crime? Extended benevolence is the last and most perfect fruit of the private affections; so that to expect to reap the former from the extinction of the latter, is to oppose the means to the end; is as absurd as to attempt to reach the summit of the highest mountain without passing through the intermediate spaces, or to hope to attain the heights of science by forgetting the first elements of knowledge. These absurdities have sprung, however, in the advocates of infidelity, from an ignorance of human nature sufficient to disgrace even those who did not style themselves philosophers. Presuming, contrary to the experience of every moment, that the affections are awakened by *reasoning*, and perceiving that the general good is an incomparably greater object *in itself* than the happiness of any limited number of individuals, they inferred nothing more was necessary than to exhibit it in its just dimensions, to draw the *affections* towards it; as though the fact of the superior populousness of China to Great Britain needed but to be known to render us indifferent to our domestic concerns, and lead us to direct all our anxiety to the prosperity of that vast but remote empire.

It is not the province of reason to awaken new passions, or open new sources of sensibility: but to direct us in the attainment of those objects which nature has already rendered pleasing, or to determine among the interfering inclinations and passions which sway the mind, which are the fittest to be preferred.

Is a regard to the general good then, you will reply, to be excluded from the motives of action? Nothing is more remote from my intention: but as the nature of this motive has, in my opinion, been much misunderstood by some good men, and abused by others of a different description to the worst of purposes, permit me to declare, in a few words, what appears to me to be the truth on this subject.

The welfare of the whole system of being must be allowed to be, *in itself*, the object of all others the most worthy of being pursued; so that, could the mind distinctly embrace it, and discern at every step *what action* would infallibly promote it, we should be furnished with a sure criterion of right and wrong, an unerring guide, which would supersede the use and necessity of all inferior rules, laws, and principles.

But this being impossible, since the good of the *whole* is a motive so loose and inde

terminate, and embraces such an infinity of relations, that before we could be certain what action it prescribed, the season of action would be past; to weak, short-sighted mortals Providence has assigned a sphere of agency less grand and extensive indeed, but better suited to their limited powers, by implanting certain *affections* which it is their duty to cultivate, and suggesting particular rules to which they are bound to conform. By these provisions the boundaries of virtue are easily ascertained, at the same time that its ultimate object, the good of the whole, is secured; for, since the happiness of the entire system results from the happiness of the several parts, the affections, which confine the attention *immediately* to the latter, conspire in the end to the promotion of the former; as the labourer, whose industry is limited to a corner of a large building, performs his part towards rearing the structure much more effectually than if he extended his care to the whole.

As the interest, however, of any limited number of persons may not only not contribute, but may possibly be directly opposed to the general good (the interest of a family, for example, to that of a province, or of a nation to that of the world,) Providence has so ordered it, that in a well regulated mind there springs up, as we have already seen, besides particular attachments, *an extended regard to the species*, whose office is two-fold: not to *destroy* and *extinguish* the more private affections, which is mental parricide; but first, as far as is consistent with the claims of those who are immediately committed to our care, *to do good to all men:* secondly, to exercise a jurisdiction and control over the private affections, so as to prohibit their indulgence whenever it could be attended with manifest detriment to the whole. Thus every part of our nature is brought into action; all the practical principles of the human heart find an element to move in, each in its different sort and manner conspiring, without mutual collisions, to maintain the harmony of the world and the happiness of the universe.*

Before I close this discourse, I cannot omit to mention three circumstances attending the propagation of infidelity by its present abettors, equally new and alarming.

1. It is the first attempt which has ever been witnessed, on an extensive scale, to

* It is somewhat singular, that many of the fashionable infidels have hit upon a definition of virtue which perfectly coincides with that of certain metaphysical divines in America, first invented and defended by that most acute reasoner, Jonathan Edwards. They both place virtue exclusively in a passion for the general good; or, as Mr. Edwards expresses it, *love to being in general;* so that our love is always to be proportioned to the magnitude of its object in the scale of being, which is liable to the objection I have already stated, as well as to many others which the limits of this note will not permit me to enumerate. Let it suffice to remark, (1.) That virtue, on these principles, is an utter impossibility: for the system of being, comprehending the Great Supreme, is *infinite:* and therefore, to maintain the proper proportion, the force of particular attachment must be infinitely less than the passion for the general good; but the limits of the human mind are not capable of any emotion so infinitely different in *degree*. (2.) Since *our views* of the extent of the universe are capable of perpetual enlargement, admitting the sum of existence is ever the same, we must return back at each step to diminish the strength of particular affections, or they will become disproportionate; and consequently, on these principles, vicious: so that the balance must be continualy fluctuating, by the weights being taken out of one scale and put into the other. (3.) If virtue consist exclusively in love to being in general, or attachment to the general good, the particular affections are, to every purpose of virtue, useless, and even pernicious; for their immediate, nay, their necessary tendency is to attract to their objects a proportion of attention which far exceeds their comparative value in the general scale. To allege that the *general* good is promoted by them will be of no advantage to the defence of this system, but the contrary, by confessing that a greater sum of happiness is attained by a deviation from, than an adherence to, its principles; unless its advocates mean by the love of being in general the same thing as the private affections, which is to confound all the distinctions of language, as well as all the operations of mind. Let it be remembered, we have no dispute respecting what is the ultimate end of virtue, which is allowed on both sides to be the greatest sum of happiness in the universe. The question is merely, what is *virtue itself?* or, in other words, what are the means appointed for the attainment of that end?

There is little doubt, from some parts of Mr. Godwin's work entitled "Political Justice," as well from his early habits of reading, that he was indebted to Mr. Edwards for his principal arguments against the private affections; though, with a daring conscience, he has pursued his principles to an extreme from which that most excellent man would have revolted with horror. The fundamental error of the whole system arose, as I conceive, from a mistaken pursuit of simplicity; from a wish to construct a moral system, without leaving sufficient scope for the infinite variety of moral phenomena and mental combination; in consequence of which its advocates were induced to place virtue *exclusively* in some *one disposition* of mind: and, since the passion for the general good is undeniably the noblest and most extensive of all others, when it is once resolved to place virtue in any *one thing*, there remained little room to hesitate which should be preferred. It might have been worth while to reflect, that in the natural world there are two kinds of attraction; one, which hold several *parts* of individual bodies in contact: another which maintains the union of bodies themselves with the general system: and that, though the union in the former case is much more *intimate* than in the latter, each is equally essential to the order of the world. Similar to this

establish the *principles of atheism;* the first effort which history has recorded to disannul and extinguish the belief of all superior powers; the consequence of which, should it succeed, would be to place mankind in a situation never before experienced, not even during the ages of pagan darkness. The system of polytheism was as remote from modern infidelity as from true religion. Amid that rubbish of superstition, the product of fear, ignorance, and vice, which had been accumulating for ages, some faint embers of sacred truth remained unextinguished; the interposition of unseen powers in the affairs of men was believed and revered, the sanctity of oaths was maintained, the idea of *revelation* and of *tradition* as a source of religious knowledge was familiar; a useful persuasion of the existence of a future world was kept alive, and the greater gods were looked up to as the guardians of the public welfare, the patrons of those virtues which promote the prosperity of states, and the avengers of injustice, perfidy, and fraud.*

Of whatever benefit superstition might formerly be productive, by the scattered particles of truth which it contained, these advantages can now only be reaped from the soil of true religion; nor is there any other alternative left than the belief of Christianity, or absolute atheism. In the revolations of the human mind, exploded *opinions* are often revived; but an exploded superstition never recovers its credit. The pretension to divine revelation is so august and commanding, that when its falsehood is once discerned, it is covered with all the ignominy of detected imposture; it falls from such a height (to change the figure) that it inevitably crumbles into atoms. Religions, whether false or true, are not creatures of arbitrary institution. After discrediting the principles of piety, should our modern freethinkers find it necessary, in order to restrain the excesses of ferocity, to seek for a substitute in some popular superstition, it will prove a vain and impracticable attempt: they may recall the names, restore the altars, and revive the ceremonies; but to rekindle the spirit of heathenism will exceed their power; because it is impossible to enact ignorance by law, or to repeal by legislative authority the dictates of reason and the light of science.

2. The efforts of infidels to diffuse the principles of infidelity among the common people is another alarming symptom peculiar to the present time. Hume, Bolingbroke, and Gibbon addressed themselves solely to the more polished classes of the community,

is the relation which the public and private affections bear to each other, and their use in the moral system.

* The testimony of Polybius to the beneficial effects which resulted from the system of pagan superstition, in fortifying the sense of moral obligation, and supporting the sanctity of oaths, is so weighty and decisive, that it would be an injustice to the subject not to insert it; more especially as it is impossible to attribute it to the influence of credulity on the author himself, who was evidently a skeptic. It is scarcely necessary to remark, that all the benefits which might in any way flow from superstition, are secured to an incomparably greater degree by the belief of true religion.

"But among all human institutions," says Polybius, "that demonstrate the superior excellencies of the Roman government, the most considerable, perhaps, is the opinion which people are taught to hold concerning the gods: and that which other men regard as an object of disgrace appears, in my judgment, to be the very thing by which this republic is chiefly sustained. I mean superstition, which is impressed with all its terrors, and influences the private actions of the citizens and the public administration of the state, to a degree that can scarcely be exceeded.

"The ancients, therefore, acted not absurdly, nor without good reason, when they inculcated the notions concerning the gods, and the belief of infernal punishments; but much rather *are those of the present age to be charged with rashness and absurdity*, in endeavoring to extirpate these opinions; for, not to mention other effects that flow from such an institution, if among the Greeks, for example, a single talent only be intrusted to those who have the management of any of the public money, though they give ten written sureties, with as many seals, and twice as many witnesses, they are unable to discharge the trust reposed in them with integrity. But the Romans, on the other hand, who in the course of their magistracies and in embassies disburse the greatest sums, are prevailed on by the single obligation of an oath to perform their duty with inviolable honesty. And as in other states a man is rarely to be found whose hands are pure from public robbery, so among the Romans it is no less rare to discover one that is tainted with this crime."—*Hampton's Polybius*, vol. iii. book vi.

Though the system of paganism is justly condemned by reason and scripture, yet it assumed as true several principles of the first importance to the preservation of public manners; such as a persuasion of an invisible power, of the folly of incurring the divine vengeance for the attainment of any present advantage, and the divine approbation of virtue: so that, strictly speaking, it was the mixture of truth in it which gave it all its utility, which is well stated by the *great and judicious* Hooker in treating on this subject. "Seeing, therefore, it doth thus appear," says that venerable author, "that the safety of all states dependeth upon religion; that religion, unfeignedly loved, perfecteth men's abilities unto all kinds of virtuous services in the commonwealth; that men's desire is, in general, to hold no religion but the true; and that whatever good effects grow out of their religion, who embrace, instead of the true, a false, the roots thereof are certain sparks of the light of truth intermingled with the darkness of error; because no religion can wholly and only consist of untruths, we have reason to think that all true virtues are to honor true religion as their parent, and all well ordered commonweals to love her as their chiefest stay."—*Eccles. Pol.* book v.

and would have thought their refined speculations debased by an attempt to enlist disciples from among the populace. Infidelity has lately grown condescending; bred in the speculations of a daring philosophy, immured at first in the cloisters of the learned, and afterwards nursed in the lap of voluptuousness and of courts; having at length reached its full maturity, it boldly ventures to challenge the suffrages of the people, solicits the acquaintance of peasants and mechanics, and seeks to draw whole nations to its standard.

It is not difficult to account for this new state of things. While infidelity was rare, it was employed as the instrument of literary vanity; its wide diffusion having disqualified it for answering that purpose, it is now adopted as the organ of political convulsion. Literary distinction is conferred by the approbation of a few; but the total subversion and overthrow of society demands the concurrence of millions.

3. The infidels of the present day are the first sophists who have presumed to innovate in the very *substance* of morals. The disputes on moral questions hitherto agitated among philosophers have respected the grounds of duty, not the nature of duty itself; or they have been merely metaphysical, and related to the history of moral sentiments in the mind, the sources and principles from which they are most easily deduced; they never turned on the quality of those dispositions and actions which were to be denominated virtuous. In the firm persuasion that the love and fear of the Supreme Being, the sacred observation of promises and oaths, reverence to magistrates, obedience to parents, gratitude to benefactors, conjugal fidelity, and parental tenderness were primary virtues, and the chief support of every commonwealth, they were unanimous. The curse denounced upon such as remove ancient landmarks, upon those who call good evil, and evil good, put light for darkness, and darkness for light, who employ their faculties to subvert the eternal distinctions of right and wrong, and thus to poison the streams of virtue at their source, falls with accumulated weight on the advocates of modern infidelity, and on them alone.

Permit me to close this discourse with a few serious reflections.—There is much, it must be confessed, in the apostacy of multitudes, and the rapid progress of infidelity, to awaken our fears for the virtue of the rising generation; but nothing to shake our faith,—nothing which Scripture itself does not give us room to expect. The features which compose the character of apostates, their profaneness, presumption, lewdness, impatience of subordination, restless appetite for change, vain pretensions to freedom and to emancipate the world, while themselves are the slaves of lust, the weapons with which they attack Christianity, and the snares they spread for the unwary, are depicted in the clearest colors by the pencil of prophecy: "Knowing this first," says Peter, "that there shall come in the last days scoffers walking after their own lusts." In the same epistle he more fully describes the persons he alludes to; "as chiefly them which walk after the flesh, in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government; presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities, sporting themselves in their own deceivings, having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: for when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error; while they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption." Of the same characters Jude admonishes us to remember that "they were foretold as mockers who should be in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts." "These be they," he adds, "who separate themselves, (by apostacy,) sensual, not having the Spirit." Infidelity is an evil of short duration. "It has," as a judicious writer observes, "no individual subsistence given it in the system of prophecy. It is not a BEAST,—but a mere putrid excrescence of the papal beast: an excrescence, which, though it may diffuse death through every vein of the body on which it grew, yet shall die along with it."* Its enormities will hasten its overthrow. It is impossible that a system which, by villifying every virtue, and embracing the patronage of almost every vice and crime, wages war with all the order and civilization of the world; which, equal to the establishment of nothing, is armed only with the energies of destruction, can long retain an ascendancy. It is in no shape formed for perpetuity. Sudden in its rise and impetuous in its progress; it resembles a mountain torrent, which is loud, filthy and desolating; but being fed by no perennial spring, is soon drained off and disappears. By permitting to a certain extent the prevalence of infidelity, Providence is preparing new triumphs for religion. In asserting its authority, the preachers of the gospel have hitherto found it necessary to weigh the prospects of immortality against the interests of time; to strip the world of its charms, to insist on the deceitfulness of pleasure, the unsatisfying nature of riches, the emptiness of grandeur, and the nothing-

* See an excellent work by the Rev. Andrew Fuller, entitled "The Gospel its own Witness."

ness of a mere worldly life. Topics of this nature will always have their use; but it is not by such representations alone that the importance of religion is evinced. The prevalence of impiety has armed us with new weapons in its defence.

Religion being primarily intended to make men "wise unto salvation," the support it ministers to the social order, the stability it confers on government and laws, is a *subordinate species* of advantage which we should have continued to enjoy, without reflecting on its cause, but for the development of deistical principles, and the experiment which has been made in a neighboring country. It had been the constant boast of infidels, that their system, more liberal and generous than Christianity, needed but to be tried to produce an immense accession to human happiness; and Christian nations careless and supine, retaining little of religion but the profession, and disgusted with its restraints, lent a favorable ear to these pretensions. God permitted the trial to be made. In one country, and that the centre of Christendom, revelation underwent a total eclipse,* while atheism, performing on a darkened theatre its strange and fearful tragedy, confounded the first elements of society, blended every age, rank, and sex in indiscriminate proscription and massacre, and convulsed all Europe to its centre; that the imperishable memorial of these events might teach the last generations of mankind to consider religion as the pillar of society, the safeguard of nations, the parent of social order, which alone has power to curb the fury of the passions, and secure to every one his rights; to the laborious the reward of their industry, to the rich the enjoyment of their wealth, to nobles the preservation of their honors, and to princes the stability of their thrones.

We might ask the patrons of infidelity what fury impels them to attempt the subversion of Christianity? Is it that they have discovered a better system? To what virtues are their principles favorable? Or is there one which Christians have not carried to a higher perfection than any of which their party can boast? Have they discovered a more excellent rule of life, or a better hope in death, than that which the Scriptures suggest? Above all, what are the pretensions on which they rest their claims to be the guides of mankind; or which embolden them to expect we should trample upon the experience of ages, and abandon a religion which has been attested by a train of miracles and prophecies, in which millions of our forefathers have found a refuge in every trouble, and consolation in the hour of death; a religion which has been adorned with the highest sanctity of character, and splendor of talents, which enrols among its disciples the names of Bacon, Newton, and Locke, the glory of their species, and to which these illustrious men were proud to dedicate the last and best fruits of their immortal genius?

If the question at issue is to be decided by argument, nothing can be added to the triumph of Christianity; if by an appeal to authority, what have our adversaries to oppose to these great names? Where are the infidels of such pure, uncontaminated morals, unshaken probity, and extended benevolence, that we should be in danger of being seduced into impiety by their example? Into what obscure recesses of misery, into what dungeons have their philanthropists penetrated, to lighten the fetters and relieve the sorrows of the helpless captive? What barbarous tribes have their apostles visited; what distant climes have *they* explored, encompassed with cold nakedness, and want, to diffuse principles of virtue, and the blessings of civilization? Or, will they rather choose to waive their pretensions to this extraordinary and, in their eyes, eccentric species of benevolence (for infidels, we know, are sworn enemies to enthusiasm of every sort,) and rest their character on their political exploits,—on their efforts to reanimate the virtue of a sinking state, to restrain licentiousness, to calm the tumult of popular fury, and by inculcating the spirit of justice, moderation, and pity for fallen greatness, to mitigate the inevitable horrors of revolution? our adversaries will at least have the discretion, if not the modesty, to recede from the test.

More than all, their infatuated eagerness, their parricidal zeal to extinguish a sense of Deity must excite astonishment and horror. Is the idea of an almighty and perfect Ruler unfriendly to any passion which is consistent with innocence, or an obstruction to any design which is not shameful to avow? Eternal God, on what are thine enemies intent! What are those enterprizes of guilt and horror, that, for the safety of their performers, require to be enveloped in a darkness which the eye of Heaven must not pierce! Miserable men! Proud of being the offspring of chance; in love with universal disorder; whose happiness is involved in the belief of there being no witness to their designs, and who are at ease only because they suppose themselves inhabitants of a forsaken and fatherless world!

* It is worthy of attention, that Mercier, a warm advocate of the French Revolution, and a professed Deist, in his recent work entitled "New Paris," acknowledges and laments the extinction of religion in France. "We have," says he, "in proscribing superstition, destroyed all religious sentiment; but this is not the way to regenerate the world."—See Appendix to the 30th vol. Monthly Review.

Having been led by the nature of the subject to consider chiefly the manner in which skeptical impiety affects the welfare of states, it is the more requisite to warn you against that most fatal mistake of regarding religion as an engine of policy; and to recall to your recollection that the concern we have in it is much more as *individuals* than as *collective bodies*, and far less temporal than eternal. The happiness which it confers in the present life comprehends the blessings which it scatters by the way in its march to immortality. That future condition of being which it ascertains, and for which its promises and truths are meant to prepare us, is the ultimate end of human societies, the final scope and object of present existence; in comparison of which all the revolutions of nations and all the vicissitudes of time are light and transitory. *Godliness has*, it is true, *the promise of the life that now is;* but chiefly *of that which is to come.* Other acquisitions may be requisite to make men great; but, be assured, the religion of Jesus is alone sufficient to make them good and happy. Powerful sources of consolation in sorrow, unshaken fortitude amid the changes and perturbations of the world, humility remote from meanness, and dignity unstained by pride, contentment in every station, passions pure and calm, with habitual serenity, the full enjoyment of life, undisturbed by the dread of dissolution or the fear of an hereafter, are its invaluable gifts. To these enjoyments, however, you will necessarily continue strangers, unless you resign yourselves wholly to its power; for the consolations of religion are reserved to reward, to sweeten, and to stimulate obedience. Many, without renouncing the profession of Christianity, without formally rejecting its distinguishing doctrines, live in such an habitual violation of its laws and contradiction to its spirit, that, conscious they have more to fear than to hope from its truth, they are never able to contemplate it without terror. It haunts their imagination, instead of tranquillizing their hearts, and hangs with depressing weight on all their enjoyments and pursuits. Their religion instead of comforting them under their troubles, is itself their greatest trouble, from which they seek refuge in the dissipation and vanity of the world, until the throbs and tumults of conscience force them back upon religion. Thus suspended between opposite powers, the sport of contradictory influences, they are disqualified for the happiness of both worlds; and neither enjoy the pleasures of sin nor the peace of piety. Is it surprising to find a mind thus bewildered in uncertainty, and dissatisfied with itself, courting deception, and embracing with eagerness every pretext to mutilate the claims and enervate the authority of Christianity; forgetting that it is of the very essence of the religious principle to preside and control, and that it is impossible to *serve God and mammon?* It is this class of professors who are chiefly in danger of being entangled in the snares of infidelity.

The champions of infidelity have much more reason to be ashamed than to boast of such converts. For what can be a stronger presumption of the falsehood of a system, than that it is the opiate of a restless conscience; that it prevails with minds of a certain description, not because they find it true, but because they feel it necessary; and that in adopting it they consult less with their reason than with their vices and their fears? It requires but little sagacity to foresee that speculations which originate in guilt must end in ruin. Infidels are not themselves satisfied with the truth of their system; for had they any settled assurance of its principles, in consequence of calm, dispassionate investigation, they would never disturb the quiet of the world by their attempts to proselyte; but would lament their own infelicity, in not being able to perceive sufficient evidence for the truth of religion, which furnishes such incentives to virtue, and inspires such exalted hopes. Having nothing to substitute in the place of religion, it is absurd to suppose that, in opposition to the collective voice of every country, age, and time proclaiming its necessity, solicitude for the welfare of mankind impels them to destroy it.

To very different motives must their conduct be imputed. More like conspirators than philosophers, in spite of the darkness with which they endeavor to surround themselves, some rays of unwelcome conviction will penetrate, some secret apprehensions that all is not right will make themselves felt, which they find nothing so effectual to quell as an attempt to enlist fresh disciples, who, in exchange for new principles, impart confidence and diminish fear. For the same reason it is seldom they attack Christianity by argument; their favorite weapons are ridicule, obscenity, and blasphemy; as the most miserable outcasts of society are, of all men, found most to delight in vulgar merriment and senseless riot.

Jesus Christ seems to have *his fan in his hand, to be thoroughly purging his floor;* and nominal Christians will probably be scattered like chaff. But has *real* Christianity any thing to fear? Have not the degenerate manners and corrupt lives of multitudes in the visible church been, on the contrary, the principal occasion of scandal and offence? Infidelity, without intending it, is gradually removing this reproach: possessing the property of attracting to itself the morbid humors which pervade the

church, until the Christian profession, on the one hand, is reduced to a sound and healthy state, and skepticism, on the other, exhibits nothing but a mass of putridity and disease.

In a view of the final issue of the contest, we should find little cause to lament the astonishing prevalence of infidelity, but for a solicitude for the rising generation, to whom its principles are recommended by two motives, with young minds the most persuasive,—the love of independence and the love of pleasure. With respect to the first, we would earnestly entreat the young to remember that, by the unanimous consent of all ages, modesty, docility, and reverence to superior years, and to parents above all, have been considered as their *appropriate virtues*, a guard assigned by the immutable laws of God and nature on the inexperience of youth; and with respect to the second, that Christianity prohibits no pleasures that are innocent, lays no restraints that are capricious; but that the sobriety and purity which it enjoins, by strengthening the intellectual powers, and preserving the faculties of mind and body in undiminished vigour, lay *the surest* foundation of present peace and future eminence.

At such a season as this, it becomes an urgent duty on parents, guardians, and tutors to watch, not only over the morals, but the principles of those committed to their care; to make it appear that a concern for their eternal welfare is their chief concern; and to imbue them early with that knowledge of the evidences of Christianity, and that profound reverence for the Scriptures, that, with the blessing of God (which, with submission, they may then expect,) *may keep them from this hour of temptation that has come upon all the world, to try them that dwell on the earth.*

To an attentive observer of the signs of the times, it will appear one of the most extraordinary phenomena of this eventful crisis, that, amid the ravages of atheism and infidelity, real religion is evidently on the increase. *The kingdom of God*, we know, *cometh not with observation;* but still there are not wanting manifest tokens of its approach. The personal appearance of the Son of God was announced by the shaking of nations; his spiritual kingdom, in all probability, will be established in the midst of similar convulsions and disorders. The blasphemous impiety of the enemies of God, as well as the zealous efforts of his sincere worshippers, will doubtless be overruled to accomplish the purposes of his unerring providence: while, in inflicting the chastisements of offended Deity on corrupt communities and nations, infidelity marks its progress by devastation and ruin, by the prostration of thrones and concussion of kingdoms; thus appalling the inhabitants of the world, and compelling them to take refuge in the church of God, the true sanctuary; the stream of divine knowlege, unobserved, is flowing in new channels, winding its course among humble valleys, refreshing thirsty deserts, and enriching with far other and higher blessings than those of commerce the most distant climes and nations, until, agreeably to the prediction of prophecy, the *knowledge of the Lord shall fill and cover the whole earth.*

Within the limits of this discourse it would be impracticable to exhibit the evidences of Christianity; nor is it my design: but there is one consideration, resulting immediately from my text, which is entitled to great weight with all who believe in the one living and true God as the sole object of worship. The Ephesians, in common with other Gentiles, are described in the text as being, previous to their conversion, *without God in the world;* that is, without any just and solid acquaintance with his character, destitute of the knowledge of his will, the institutes of his worship, and the hopes of his favor; to the truth of which representation, whoever possesses the slightest acquaintance with pagan antiquity must assent. Nor is it a fact less incontestable, that, while human philosophy was never able to abolish idolatry in a single village, the promulgation of the gospel overthrew it in a great part (and that the most enlightened) of the world. If our belief in the unity and perfections of God, together with his moral government and exclusive right to the worship of mankind, be founded in truth, they cannot reasonably be denied to be truths of the first importance, and infinitely to outweigh the greatest discoveries in science; because they turn the hopes, fears, and interests of man into a totally different channel from that in which they must otherwise flow. Wherever these principles are first admitted, there a new dominion is erected, and a new system of laws established.

But since all events are under divine direction, is it reasonable to suppose that the great Parent, after suffering his creatures to continue for ages ignorant of his true character, should at length, in the course of his Providence, fix upon falsehood, and that alone, as the effectual method of making himself known; and that, what the virtuous exercise of reason in the best and wisest men was never permitted to accomplish, he should confer on fraud and delusion the honor of effecting? It ill comports with the majesty of truth, or the character of God, to believe that he has built the noblest superstructure on the weakest foundation; or reduced mankind to the miserable alternative either of remaining destitute of

the knowledge of himself, or of deriving it from the polluted source of impious imposture. We therefore feel ourselves justified, on this occasion, in adopting the triumphant boast of the great apostle: *Where is the wise, where is the scribe, where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.*

NOTE TO PAGE 108.

The fury of the most sanguinary parties was especially pointed against the Christian priesthood, &c.—The author finds he has given great offence to some friends whom he highly esteems, by applying the term *Christian priesthood* to the popish clergy. He begs leave to make a remark or two by way of apology.

1. It is admitted by all candid Protestants that salvation is attainable in the Roman Catholic church; but he should be glad to be informed what part of the Christian covenant entitles us to expect the salvation of those (where the gospel is promulgated) who are not even a branch of the visible church of Christ. The papistical tenets are either *fundamentally* erroneous, on which supposition it is certain no papist can be saved; or their errors must be consistent with Christian faith, and, consequently, cannot be a valid reason for excluding those who maintain them from being a part (a most corrupt part, if you please, but still a part) of the Christian church.

2. The popish clergy were persecuted under the *character of Christians*, not under the notion of heretics or schismatics. They who were the subjects of persecution were certainly the best judges of its aim and direction; and when the Archbishop of Paris and others endeavored to screen themselves from its effects by a recantation, what did they recant? Was it popery? No; but the profession of Christianity. These apostates, doubtless, meant to remove the ground of offence, which, in their opinion, was the Christian profession. If the soundest ecclesiastical historians have not refused the honors of martyrdom to such as suffered in the cause of truth among the Gnostics, it ill becomes the liberality of the present age to contemplate with sullen indifference, or malicious joy, the sufferings of conscientious Catholics.

3. At the period to which the author refers, Christian worship of *every kind* was prohibited; while in solemn mockery of religion, adoration was paid to a strumpet, under the title of Goddess of Reason. Is it necessary to prove that men who were abandoned must be hostile to true religion under every form? Or, if there be any gradations in their abhorrence, to that most which is the most pure and perfect? Are atheism and obscenity more congenial to the Protestant than to the popish profession? To have incurred the hatred of the ruling party of France at the season alluded to is an honor which the author would be sorry to resign, as the exclusive boast of the church of Rome. To have been the object of the partiality of such bloody and inhuman monsters would have been a stain upon Protestants which the virtue of ages could not obliterate.

EXPOSITORY DISCOURSES

ON THE

BOOK OF GENESIS,

INTERSPERSED WITH

PRACTICAL REFLECTIONS.

BY ANDREW FULLER.

TO THE

BAPTIST CHURCH OF CHRIST

AT KETTERING.

My dear Brethren,

It is now upwards of twenty-two years since I first took the oversight of you in the Lord. During the last fifteen years it has, as you know, been my practice to expound among you, on a Lord's day morning, some part of the Holy Scriptures, commonly a chapter. From all that I have felt in my own mind, and heard from you, I have reason to hope these exercises have not been in vain. They have enabled us to take a more connected view of the Scriptures than could be obtained merely by sermons on particular passages; and I acknowledge that, as I have proceeded, the work of exposition has become more and more interesting to my heart.

I have not been in the habit of writing dedications to what I have published, but in this instance I feel inclined to deviate from my usual practice. Considering my time of life, and the numerous avocations on my hands, I may not be able to publish any thing more of the kind; and, if not, permit me to request that this family book may be preserved as a memorial of our mutual affection, and of the pleasures we have enjoyed together in exploring the treasures of the lively oracles.

You will consider these Discourses as the result of having *once* gone over that part of the Scripture to which they relate. Were we to go over it again, such is the fulness of God's word, that we should still find interesting and important matter which had never occurred in reading it before; and this should encourage us not to rest in any exposition, but to be constantly perusing the Scriptures themselves, and digging at the precious ore.

As the Exposition was delivered in public worship, it was not my wish to dwell upon particular words, so much as to convey the general scope and design of the Scriptures. Whether I have in any considerable degree caught the *spirit* which runs through them is too much for me to decide: but this I can say, that such has been my aim. I know by experience that, with respect to this, when I have been the most spiritually minded, I have succeeded the best; and therefore conclude that, if I had lived nearer to God, the work had been better executed. But, such as it is, I commend it to the blessing of God and your candid acceptance: and remain

Your affectionate Pastor,

THE AUTHOR.

Kettering, *Oct.* 29, 1805.

PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY PROPERTY OF REC. APR

EXPOSITORY DISCOURSES.

DISCOURSE I.

ON THE BOOK IN GENERAL, AND THE FIRST DAY'S CREATION.

Genesis i.—4.

It is common for the writers of other histories to go back in their researches as far as possible; but Moses traces his from *the beginning*. The whole book is upon *the origin of things*, even of all things that had a beginning. The visible creation, the generations of man, moral evil among men, the spiritual kingdom of the Messiah, the new world, the church in the family of Abraham, the various nations and tribes of man; every thing in short, now going on in the world, may be traced hither as to its spring-head. Without this history the world would be in total darkness, not knowing whence it came, nor whither it goeth. In the first page of this sacred book a child may learn more in an hour than all the philosophers in the world learned without it in thousands of years.

There is a majestic sublimity in the introduction. No apology, preamble, or account of the writer: you are introduced at once into the very heart of things. No vain conjectures about what was before time, nor *why* things were done thus and thus; but simply so it was.

In this account of the creation nothing is said on the *being of God;* this great truth is taken for granted. May not this apparent omission be designed to teach us that those who deny the existence of a Deity are rather to be rebuked than reasoned with? All reasoning and instruction must proceed upon some principle or principles, and what can be more proper than this? Those writers who have gone about to prove it have, in my opinion, done but little, if any good; and in many instances have only set men a doubting upon a subject which is so manifest from every thing around them as to render the very heathens *without excuse*.—Rom. i. 20.

The foundation of this vast fabric is laid in an adequate cause—Elohim, *The Almighty*. Nothing else would bear it. Man, if he attempt to find an adequate cause for what is, to the overlooking of God, shall but weary himself with very vanity.

The writer makes use of the plural term *Elohim*, which yet is joined to singular verbs. This has been generally thought to intimate the doctrine of a plurality in the unity of the Godhead. It is certain the Scriptures speak of the Son and Holy Spirit as concerned in creation, as well as the Father.—John i. 1; Gen. i. 2. Nor can I, on any other supposition, affix a consistent meaning to such language as that which afterwards occurs: "Let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness."—"Behold, the man is become like *one of us*."

The account given by Moses relates not to the *whole creation*, but merely to what it immediately concerns us to know. God made angels; but nothing is said of them. The moon is called one of the *greater* lights, not as to what it is in itself, but what it is *to us*. The Scriptures are written, not to gratify curiosity, but to nourish faith. They do not stop to tell you *how*, nor to answer a number of questions which might be asked; but tell you so much as is necessary, and no more.

Ver. 1, 2. The first act of creation seems to have been *general*, and the foundation of all that followed. What the *heavens* were when first produced, previously to the creation of the sun, moon, and stars, it did not greatly concern us to know, and therefore we are not told. What the *earth* was we are informed in verse 2. It was a chaos, *without form, and void;* a confused mass of earth and water, covered with darkness, and void of all those fruits which afterwards covered the face of it. As regeneration is called a *creation*, this may fitly represent the state of the soul while under the dominion of sin.—"The Spirit of God *moved* upon the face of the waters. The word signifies as much as brooded; and so is expressive of "an active, effectual energy, agitating the vast abyss, and infusing into it a powerful vital principle." Hence those lines of Milton:—

> "And chiefly thou, O Spirit———
> ———That with mighty wings outspread,
> Dove like, satt'st *brooding* on the vast abyss,
> And mad'st it pregnant."

Thus also God hath wrought upon the moral world, which, under sin, was without form, and void; and thus he operates upon every individual mind, causing it to bring forth fruit unto himself.

Ver. 3. From a general account of the creation, the sacred writer proceeds to particulars; and the first thing mentioned is the production of *light*. The manner in which this is related has been considered as an example of the sublime. It expresses a great event in a few simple words, and exhibits the almighty God perfectly in character: "He speaks, and it is done;

he commands, and it stands fast." The work of the Holy Spirit upon the dark soul of man is fitly set forth in allusion to this great act of creation: "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ." As soon might chaos have emerged from its native darkness as our benighted world, or benighted souls, have found the light of life of their own accord. Nor was it sufficient to have furnished us with a revelation from heaven: the same almighty power that was necessary to give material light a being in the world was necessary to give spiritual light a being in the heart.

The *light* here mentioned was not that of the sun, which was created afterwards. Hence a late infidel writer has raised an objection against the Scriptures, that they speak of *light*, and even of *night* and *day*, which are well known to arise from the situation of the earth towards the sun, before the sun was made. But he might as well have objected that they speak of the *earth* in ver. 1, 2, and yet afterwards tell us of the dry land, as separated from the waters, constituting the earth, ver. 9, 10. The truth seems to be that what chaos was to the earth that the light was to the sun: the former denotes the general principles of which the latter was afterwards composed. A flood of light was produced on the first day of creation; and on the fourth it was collected and formed into distinct bodies. And though these bodies, when made, were to rule day and night, yet, prior to this, day and night were ruled by the Creator's so disposing of the light and darkness as to *divide* them, ver. 4. That which was afterwards done ordinarily by the sun, was now done extraordinarily by the division of darkness and light.

Ver. 4. "God saw the light that it was good." Light is a wonderful creature, full of goodness to us. This is sensibly felt by those who have been deprived of it, either by the loss of sight, or by confinement in dungeons or mines. How pathetically does our blind poet lament the loss of it:—

> "Seasons return; but not to me returns
> Day, or the sweet approach of ev'n or morn,
> Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
> Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine:
> But cloud instead, and ever-during dark
> Surrounds me! From the cheerful ways of men
> Cut off; and, for the book of knowledge fair,
> Presented with a universal blank
> Of nature's works, to me expunged and rased,
> And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out!"

If such be the value of material light, how much more of that which is mental and spiritual; and how much are we indebted to the Holy Spirit of God for inditing the Scriptures, and opening our benighted minds to understand them!

DISCOURSE II.

ON THE LAST FIVE DAYS' CREATION.

Gen. i. 6—31.

Ver. 6—8. We here enter upon the second day, which was employed in making a *firmament*, or *expanse*. It includes the atmosphere, and all that is visible, from the position of the sun, moon, and stars, down to the surface of the globe, ver. 14, 15, 20.

The use of it was to "divide the waters from the waters:" that is, the waters on the earth from the waters in the clouds, which are well known to be supported by the buoyant atmosphere. The *division* here spoken of is that of *distribution*. God, having made the substance of all things, goes on to distribute them. By means of this, the earth is watered by the rain of heaven, without which it would be unfruitful, and all its inhabitants perish. God makes nothing in vain. There is a grandeur in the firmament to the eye; but this is not all: usefulness is combined with beauty. Nor is it useful only with respect to animal subsistence: it is a mirror, conspicuous to all, displaying the glory of its Creator, and showing his handy works. The clouds also, by emptying themselves upon the earth, set us an example of generosity, and reprove those who, *full* of this world's good, yet keep it principally to themselves. Eccles. xi. 1—3.

Ver. 9—13. God having divided the heavens and the earth, he now, on the third day, proceeds to subdivide the earth or chaos, into land and water. The globe became terraqueous; partly earth and partly sea.

It is easy to perceive the goodness of God in this distribution. Important as earth and water both are, yet, while mixed together, they afford no abode for creatures; but, separated, each is a beautiful habitation, and each subserves the other. By means of this distribution the waters are ever in motion, which preserves them, and almost every thing else, from stagnancy and putrefaction. That which the circulation of the blood is to the animal frame, the waters are to the world: were they to stop, all would stagnate and die.—Eccles. i. 7. See how careful our heavenly Father was to build us a habitation before he gave us a being. Nor is this the only instance of the kind: our Redeemer has acted on the same principle, in going before to *prepare a place for us*.

Having fitted the earth for fruitfulness, God proceeds to clothe it with grass, and herbs, and trees of every kind. There seems to be an emphasis laid on every herb

and tree *having its seed in itself* We here see the prudent foresight, if I may so speak, of the great Creator in providing for futurity. It is a character that runs through all his works, that, having communicated the first principles of things, they should go on to multiply and increase, not independently of him, but as blessed by his conservative goodness. It is thus that true religion is begun and carried on in the mind, and in care and the world.

Ver. 14—19. After dividing this lower world, and furnishing it with the principles of vegetation, the creator proceeded, on the fourth day, to the producing of the heavenly bodies. First, they are described in general as the lights of heaven (ver. 14, 15;) and then more particularly, as the sun, moon and stars, ver. 16—19.

The *use* of these bodies is said to be not only for dividing the day from the night, but "for signs and seasons, and days and years." They ordinarily afford *signs* of weather to the husbandman (Matt. xvi. 3;) and prior to the discovery of the use of the loadstone, were of great importance to the mariner.—Acts xxvii. 20. They appear also, on some extraordinary occasions, to have been premonitory to the world. Previously to the destruction of Jerusalem, our Lord foretold that there should be great earthquakes in divers places, and famines, and pestilences, and fearful sights, and great *signs* from heaven.—Luke xxi. 11. And it is said by Josephus that a comet, like a flaming sword, was seen for a long time over that devoted city, a little before its destruction by the Romans. Heathen astrologers made gods of these creatures, and filled the minds of men with chimerical fears concerning them. Against these God warns his people, saying, "Be ye not dismayed at the signs of heaven." This, however, does not prove but that he may sometimes make use of them. Modern astronomers, by accounting for various phenomena, would deny their being signs of any thing: but to avoid the superstitions of heathenism, there is no necessity for our running into atheism.

The heavenly bodies are also said to be for *seasons*, as winter and summer, day and night. We have no other standard for the measuring of time. The grateful vicissitudes also which attend them are expressive of the *goodness* of God. If it were always day or night, summer or winter, our enjoyments would be unspeakably diminished. Well is it said at every pause, *And God saw that it was* GOOD!

David improved this subject to a religious purpose: "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge." Every night we retire we are reminded of death; and every morning we arise, of the resurrection. In beholding the sun also, "which is as a bride-groom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run his race," we see every day a glorious example of the steady and progressive "path of the just, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

Ver. 20—25. We are next led to review the animal creation; a species of being less resplendant but not less useful, than some of greater note. In one view, the smallest animal has a property belonging to it which renders it superior to the sun. It has life, and some degree of knowledge. It is worthy of notice, too, that the creation begins with things without life, and proceeds to things possessing vegetative life, then to those which have animal life, and after that to man, who is the subject of rational life. This shows that life is of great account in the Creator's estimation, who thus causes the subject to rise upon us as we proceed.

Ver. 26--31. We are now come to the sixth and last day's work of creation, which is of greater account to us than any which have gone before, as the subject of it is *man*.—We may observe,

1. That the creation of man is introduced differently from that of all other beings. It is described as though it were the result of a special council, and as though there were a peculiar importance attached to it: "God said, Let us make man." Under the Great Supreme, man was to be the lord of the lower world. On him would depend its future well-being. Man was to be a distinguished link in the chain of being; uniting the animal with the spiritual world, the frailty of the dust of the ground with the breath of the Almighty; and possessing that consciousness of right and wrong which should render him a proper subject of moral government.

2. Man was honored in being made after his Creator's *image*. This is repeated with emphasis: "God created man in his own image; in the image of God created he him." The image of God is partly natural and partly moral; and man was made after both. The former consisted in *reason*, by which he was fitted for dominion over the creatures, James iii. 7: the latter, in *righteousness and true holiness*, by which he was fitted for communion with his Creator. The figure of his body, by which he was distinguished from all other creatures, was an emblem of his mind: *God made man upright*. I remember once, on seeing certain animals which approached near to the human form, feeling a kind of jealousy (shall I call it?) for the honor of my species. What a condescension then, thought I, must it be for the eternal God to stamp *his image* upon man!

"God made man upright." He knew

and loved his Creator, living in fellowship with him and the holy angels. Oh, how fallen! "How is the gold become dim, and the most fine gold changed!"

DISCOURSE III.

CREATION REVIEWED.

Gen. ii.

This chapter contains a review of the creation, with the addition of some particulars, such as the institution of the sabbath, the place provided for man, the law given him, and the manner of the creation of woman.

Ver. 1. There is something impressive in this review: "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them"—wisely, mightily, kindly, gradually, but perfectly. Man's work especially when great, is commonly a work of ages. One lays the foundation, and another the top-stone; or, what is worse, one pulls down what another had reared: but God finishes his work. "He is a rock, and his work is perfect."

Ver. 2, 3. The conclusion of so divine a work required to be celebrated, as well as the Creator adored, in all future ages: hence arose the institution of the sabbath. We are not to imagine that God was weary, or that he was unable to have made the whole in one day; but this was done for an example to us.

The keeping of the sabbath sacred for divine worship has been a topic of much dispute. Some have questioned whether it was kept by the patriarchs, or before the departure of Israel from Egypt; supposing that Moses, who wrote the book of Genesis about that time, might be led to introduce God's resting from his works on the seventh day as a motive to enforce what was then enjoined upon them. But if there was social worship before the flood, and during the patriarchal ages, one should think there must have been a time for it. We expressly read of time being divided into *weeks* during these ages, chap. xxix. 27, 28: and as early as the flood, when Noah sent out the dove once and again from the ark, the term of "seven days" is noticed as the space between the times of sending her. Add to this the division of time into weeks is said to have been very common in heathen nations in all ages; so that, though they ceased to observe the sabbath, yet they retained what was a witness against them—the time of its celebration.

The sabbath was not only appointed for God, but to be *a day of rest for man*, particularly for the poor. It was enjoined on Israel for this reason, "That thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou: and remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt." Those who would set it aside are no less the enemies of the poor than of God and religion: they consult only their worldly interest. If such sordid characters could so order it, their servants would be always in the yoke. Nor would their being so in the least tend to increase their wages; every day's work would be worth a little less than it is now, and the week's work would amount to much the same. To those who fear God it is also a rest to the *mind;* a time of refreshing after the toils of worldly labor.

The *reason* for keeping the sabbath was drawn not only from God's having rested, but from the rest which Israel felt from the yoke of Egypt.—Deut. v. 14, 15. And we have since that time another reason, namely, Christ having rested from his works, as God did from his.—Heb. iv. 4—10. Hence, according to the practice of the primitive Christians, the day was altered, Acts xx. 7: and by how much more interesting the work of redemption is than that of creation by so much is this reason greater than the other.

Finally: It is a Jewish tradition, and seems to have generally prevailed, that, as there is a harmony of times in the works of God, this seventh day of rest is prefigurative of the seven thousandth year of the world being a rest to the church. We know that years were divided into sevens, and seven time sevens. Every seventh year the land was to have its sabbath, and every fiftieth year its jubilee: and thus it may be with the world. If so we are not at a great distance from it; and this will be the period when a great number of prophecies of the universal spread of the gospel shall be fulfilled.

Ver. 4—7. After reviewing the whole in general, and noticing the day of rest, the sacred writer takes a special review of the vegetable creation, with an intent to mark the difference of its first production and ordinary propagation. Plants are now ordinarily produced by rain upon the earth and human tillage: but the first plants were made before there was any rain, or any human hand to till the ground. *After this*, a mist or vapor arose which engendered rain and watered the earth.—ver. 6. So also *after this* God formed man to till the ground.—ver. 7. It is God's immediate work to communicate the first principles of things; but their growth is promoted by the instrumentality of man. And now, having made mention of man, he tells us of what he was made. His body was formed "of the dust of the ground." His soul pro-

ceeded from the inspiration of the Almighty. What a wonderful compound is man! There seems to be something in the additional phrase: "And man became a living soul." God is said to breathe the breath of life into all animals; and we sometimes read of the *soul* of every living thing: but they are never said to *be* living souls, as men are. God hath stamped rationality and immortality upon men's souls, so as to render them capable of a seperate state of being, even when their bodies are dead. Hence the soul of a beast, when it dies, is said to go downwards; but the soul of man upwards.—Eccles. xii. 7.

Ver. 8. Next we have an account of the *place* provided for man: not only the world at large, but a pleasant part of it. It was situated in the country of Eden, in Asia; probably among the mountains of the East. It was near the origin of several rivers, which always proceed from mountainous parts of the country. It is spoken of as rich and fruitful in a high degree, so as even to become proverbial.—Gen. xiii. 10; Isa. li. 3.

Ver. 9. Things were also adapted to *accommodate* man: trees and fruits, for pleasure and use, were ready to his hand. Among the trees of Eden there were two in particular which appear to have been *symbolical*, or designed by the Creator to give instruction, in the manner which is done by our positive institutions. One was "the tree of life," to which he had free access. This was designed as a symbol to him of that life which stood connected with his obedience; and, therefore, when he sinned he was debarred from eating it, by the flaming sword and cherubim, which turned every way to guard it. The other was "the tree of knowledge of good and evil," which was the only tree of the fruit of which he was forbidden to eat. As the name of the former of these trees is given it from the effect which should follow obedience, so that of the latter seems to have been from the effect which should follow on disobedience. Man, on the day he should eat thereof, should know good in a way of loss, and evil in a way of sufferance.

Ver. 10—14. Besides this, it was a well-watered garden. A river rose among the mountains of the country of Eden, which directed its course through it; and afterwards divided into four heads, or branches. Two of them are elsehwere mentioned in Scripture; viz. he Hiddekel, or Tigris, and the Euphrates, both rivers of Asia. With the others we are less acquainted.

Ver. 15. Among the provisions for man's happiness was *employment*. Even in innocence he was to *dress the garden and keep it*. Man was not made to be idle. All things are full of labor: it is a stupid notion that happiness consists in slothful ease, or in having nothing to do. Those who are so now, whether the very rich or the very poor, are commonly among the most worthless and miserable of mankind.

Ver. 16, 17. The trial of man, by a special prohibition, was singularly adapted to the end. To have conformed to his Creator's will, he must always have been contented with implicit obedience, or satisfied in abstaining from a thing on the mere ground of its being forbidden of God, without perceiving the *reason* of his being required to do so. In truth, it was a test of his continuing in the spirit of a little child, that should have no will of its own; and this is still the spirit of true religion. The consequences attached to a breach of this positive law teach us also not to trifle with the will of God in his ordinances, but implicitly to obey it.

More particularly: Observe, 1. The *fulness* of the grant. Here was enough for man's happiness without the forbidden fruit; and so there is now in the world, without transgressing the boundaries of heaven. 2. The *positiveness* of the prohibition—"Thou shalt not eat of it." So long as this was kept in mind it was well; and it appears to have been deeply impressed, from the first answer of the woman to the serpent, chap. iii. 3. It was this impression which he aimed to efface by his devilish question, "Yea, hath God said it?" And, when once she began to doubt of this, all was over. Let us learn to keep God's words in our minds and hide them in our hearts, that we may not sin against him. It was with—Thus and thus *it is written*, that our Lord repelled all his temptations. 3. The *penalty* annexed: "Thou shalt die," or, "Dying thou shalt die." Some think this means corporeal death, and that if the threatening had been executed man must have been immediately struck out of existence. But the death here threatened, whatever it was, is said to have *passed upon all men*, which implies the existence of all men, and which would have been prevented if Adam had at that time been reduced to a state of non-existence. The original constitution of things provided for the existence of every individual that has since been born into the world, and that whether man should stand or fall. The death here threatened doubtless included that of the body, which God might execute at pleasure: the day he should eat he would be dead in law. But it also included the loss of the divine favor and exposedness to his wrath. If it were not so, the redemption of Christ would not be properly opposed to it, which it frequently is.—Rom. v. 12—21; Heb. ix. 27, 28. Nor is Adam to be considered as merely a private individual: he was the

head of all his posterity, so that his transgression involved their being transgressors from the womb, and alike exposed to death with himself. Such has been the character of all mankind; and such is the account of things given in the Scriptures. If men now find fault with this part of the divine government, it is what they will not be able to stand to at the last day. The judge of all the earth will, in that day, appear to have done right, whatever may be thought of him at present. 4. The *promise* of life implied by it. There is every reason to believe that if man had obeyed his Creator's will he would of his own boundless goodness, have crowned him with everlasting bliss. It is his delight to impart his own infinite blessedness as the reward of righteousness: if Adam, therefore, had continued in the truth, he and all his posterity would have enjoyed what was symbolically promised him by the tree of life. Nor is there any reason to suppose but that it would have been the same *for substance* as that which believers now enjoy through a Mediator: for the Scriptures speak of that which the law could not do (in that it was weak *through the flesh*, that is, through the corruption of human nature,) as being accomplished by Christ.—Rom. viii. 3, 4.

Ver. 18—25. The subject closes with a more particular account of the creation of woman. We had a general one before (chap. i. 27;) but now we are led to see the reasons of it. Observe, 1. It was not only for the propagation of the human race, but a most distinguished provision for human happiness. The woman was made *for the man;* not merely for the gratification of his appetites, but of his rational and social nature. It was not good that man should be alone; and therefore a helper that should be *meet*, or suitable, was given him. The place assigned to the woman in Heathen and Mahomedan countries has been highly degrading; and the place assigned her by modern infidels is not much better. Christianity is the only religion that conforms to the original design, that confines a man to one wife, and that teaches him to treat her with propriety. Go among the enemies of the gospel, and you shall see the woman either reduced to abject slavery, or basely flattered for the vilest of purposes; but in Christian families you may see her treated with honor and respect; treated as a friend, as naturally an equal, a soother of man's cares, a softener of his griefs, and a partner of his joys. 2. She was made after the other creatures were named; and, consequently, after Adam, having seen and observed all the animals, had found none of them a fit companion for himself, and thus felt the want of one. The blessings both of nature and of grace are greatly endeared to us by our being suffered to feel the want of them before we have them. 3. She was made *out of man*, which should lead men to consider their wives as a part of themselves, and to love them as their own flesh. The woman was not taken, it is true, from the head, neither was she taken from the feet; but from somewhere near the heart! 4. That which was now done would be a standing law of nature. Man would "leave father and mother, and cleave to his wife, and they twain should be one flesh." Finally: It is added, "they were both naked, and were not ashamed." There was no guilt, and therefore no shame: shame is one of the fruits of sin.

DISCOURSE IV.

THE FALL OF MAN.

Genesis iii. 1—7.

We have hitherto seen man as God created him, upright and happy. But here we behold a sad reverse: the introduction of moral evil into our world, the source of all our misery.

There can be no doubt but that the serpent was used as an instrument of Satan, who hence is called "that old serpent, the devil." The subtilty of this creature might answer his purposes. The account of the serpent *speaking* to the woman might lead us to a number of curious questions, on which, after all, we might be unable to obtain satisfaction. Whether we are to understand this, or the temptations of our Lord in the wilderness, as spoken in an audible voice, or not, I shall not take upon me to decide. Whatever may be said of either case, it is certain, from the whole tenor of Scripture, that evil spirits have, by the divine permission, access to human minds: not indeed so as to be able to impel us to sin without our consent; but it may be in some such manner as men influence each other's minds to evil. Such seems to be the proper idea of a tempter. We are conscious of *what we choose;* but are scarcely at all acquainted with the things that *induce* choice. We are exposed to innumerable influences; and have therefore reason to pray, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil!"

With respect to the temptation itself, it begins by calling in question the truth of God.—Is it true that God has prohibited any tree? Can it be? For what was it created? Such are the inquiries of wicked men to this day. "For what are the objects of pleasure made," say they, "but to

be enjoyed? Why did God create meats and drinks, and dogs and horses? What are appetites for, but to be indulged?" We might answer, among other things, to try them who dwell on the earth.

It seems also to contain an insinuation that if man must not eat of every tree, he might as well eat of none. And thus discontent continues to overlook the good, and pores upon the one thing wanting, "All this availeth me nothing, so long as Mordecai is at the gate."

Ver. 2, 3. The answer of Eve seems to be very good at the outset. She very properly repels the insinuation against the goodness of God, as though, because he had withheld one tree, he had, or might as well have withheld, all. "No," says she, "we may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; there is only one withheld." She also with equal propriety and decision, repelled the doubt which the tempter had raised respecting the prohibition of that one. The terms by which she expresses it show how clearly she understood the mind of God, and what an impression his command had made upon her mind: "Of the fruit of this tree, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it; neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die!" We do not read that they were forbidden to *touch* it; but she understood a prohibition of eating to contain a prohibition of *touching*. And this exposition of the woman, while upright, affords a good rule to us. If we would shun evil, we must shun the appearance of it, and all the avenues which lead to it. To parley with temptation is to play with fire. In all this Eve sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.

Ver. 4, 5. The wily serpent now proceeds to a second attack. Mark the progress of the temptation. At the outset he only suggested his doubts; but now he deals in positive assertion. In this manner the most important errors creep into the mind. He who sets off with apparently modest doubts will often be seen to end in downright infidelity.

The positivity of the tempter might be designed to oppose that of the woman. She is peremptory; he also is peremptory; opposing assertion to assertion. This artifice of Satan is often seen in his ministers. Nothing is more common than for the most false and pernicious doctrines to be advanced with a boldness that stuns the minds of the simple, and induces a doubt: "Surely I must be in the wrong, and they in the right, or they could not be so confident."

Yet the tempter, it is observable, does not positively deny that God might have *said* so and so; for this would have been calling in question the veracity of Eve, or denying what she knew to be true; which must have defeated his end. But he insinuates that, whatever God might have said, which he would not now dispute, *it would not in the end prove so.* Satan will not be so unpolite as to call in question either the honor or the understanding of Eve, but scruples not to make God a liar; yea, and has the impudence to say that *God knew* that, instead of proving an evil, it would be a benefit. Alas, how often has man been flattered by the ministers of Satan at God's expense! Surely we need not be at a loss in judging whence those doctrines proceed which invalidate the divine threatnings, and teach sinners going on still in their trespass, "Ye shall not surely die." Nor those which lead men to consider the divine prohibitions as aimed to diminish their happiness; or which is the same thing, to think it rigid or hard that we should be obliged to comply with them. And those doctrines which flatter our pride, or provoke a vain curiosity to pry into things unseen, proceed from the same quarter. By aspiring to be a god, man became too much like a devil; and, where human reason takes upon itself to set aside revelation, the effects will continue to be much the same.

Ver. 6. This poison had effect . . . the woman paused . . . . looked at the fruit . . . . It began to appear desirable . . . . she felt a wish to be *wise* . . . . in short, she took of the fruit . . . . and did eat! But was she not alarmed when she had eaten? It seems not; and, feeling no such consequences follow as she perhaps expected, ventured even to persuade her husband to do as she had done; and with her persuasion he complied. The connection between sin and misery is *certain*, but not always immediate: its immediate effects are deception and stupefaction, which commonly induce the party to draw others into the same condition.

It does not appear that Adam was deceived; but the woman only.—1 Tim. ii. 14. He seems to have sinned with his eyes open; and perhaps from love to his wife. It was the first time, but not the last, in which Satan has made use of the nearest and tenderest parts of ourselves, to draw our hearts from God. Lawful affection may become a snare. If the nearest relation or friend tempt us to depart from God, we must not hearken. When the woman had sinned against God, it was the duty of her husband to have disowned her for ever, and to have left it to his Creator to provide for his social comfort: but a fond attachment to the creature overcame him. He *hearkened to her voice;* and plunged headlong into her sin.

Ver. 7. And now, having both sinned, they begin to be sensible of its effects. Conscious innocence has forsaken them. Conscious guilt, remorse, and shame, possess

them. Their eyes are now opened indeed, as the tempter had said they would be: but it is to sights of wo. Their naked bodies, for the first time excite shame, and are emblems of their souls; which stripped of their original righteousness, are also stripped of their honor, security, and happiness.

To hide their outward nakedness, they betake themselves to the leaves of the garden. This, as a great writer observes, was "to cover, not to cure." And to what else is all the labor of sinners directed? Is it not to *conceal the bad*, and to *appear* what they are not, that they are continually studying and contriving? And being enabled to impose upon one another, they with little difficulty impose upon themselves, "trusting in themselves that they are righteous, and despising others." But all is mere show, and when God comes to summon them to his bar will prove of no account.

DISCOURSE V.

THE TRIAL OF THE TRANSGRESSORS.

Gen. iii. 8—14.

VER. 8 We have seen the original transgression of our first parents; and now we see them called to account and judged. The Lord God is represented as "walking in the garden in the cool of the day;" that is, in the evening. This seems to denote the ordinary and intimate communion which man enjoyed with his Maker, while he kept his first estate. We may be at a loss in forming an idea how God could *walk* in the garden, and how he *spoke*; but he was not at a loss how to hold communion with them that loved him. To accomodate it to our weak capacities, it is represented under the form of the owner of a garden taking his evening walk in it, to see, as we should say, "whether the vine flourished, and the pomegranates budded; to see and converse with those whom he had placed over it.

The cool of the day, which to God was the season for visiting his creatures, may, as it respects man, denote a season of *reflection*. We may sin in the day time; but God will call us to account at night. Many a one has done that in the *heat* and bustle of the day which has afforded bitter reflection in the *cool* of the evening; and such, in many instances, has proved the evening of life.

The *voice* of God was heard, it seems, before any thing was seen: and as he appears to have acted towards man in his usual way, and as though he knew of nothing that had taken place till he had it from his own mouth, we may consider this as the voice of kindness; such, whatever it was, as Adam had used to hear beforetime, and on the first sound of which he and his companion had ben used to draw near, as sheep at the voice of the shepherd, or as children to the voice of a father. The voice of one whom we love conveys life to our hearts: but alas, it is not so now! Not only does conscious guilt make them afraid, but contrariety of heart to a holy God renders them unwilling to draw near to him. The kindest language, to one who is become an enemy, will work in a wrong way. "Let favor be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord." Instead of coming at his call, as usual, they "hide themselves from his presence among the trees of the garden." Great is the cowardice which attaches to guilt. It flies from God, and from all approaches to him in prayer or praise: yea, even from the very thoughts of him, and of death and judgment, when they must appear before him. But wherefore flee to the trees of the garden? Can they screen them from the eyes of Him with whom they have to do? Alas they could not hide themselves and their nakedness from their own eyes; how then should they elude discovery before an omniscient God? But we see here to what a stupid and besotted state of mind sin had already reduced them.

Ver. 9. God's general voice of kindness receiving no answer, he is more particular; calling Adam by name, and inquiring, "Where art thou?" In vain does the sinner hide himself: the Almighty will find them out! If he answers not to the voice of God in his word, he shall have a special summons served upon him before long? Observe what the summons was: "Where art thou?" It seems to be the language of injured friendship. As if he should say, How is it that I do not meet thee as heretofore? What have I done unto thee, and wherein have I wearied thee? Have I been a barren wilderness, or a land of drought? How is it that thou hailest not my approach as on former occasions?—It was also language adapted to lead him to reflection: "Where art thou?" Ah, where indeed! God is thus interrogating sinful men. Sinner, where art thou? What is thy condition? In what way art thou walking, and whither will it lead thee?

Ver. 10. To this trying question man is compelled to answer. See with what ease God can bring the offender to his bar. He has only to speak, and it is done. "He shall call to the heavens and the earth, that he may judge his people." But what answers can be made to him? "I heard thy

voice in the garden."—Did you? Then you cannot plead ignorance.—No, but something worse:—"I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." Take notice, he says nothing about his sin, but merely asks of its *effects:* such as fear, and conscious nakedness or guilt. The language of a contrite spirit would have been, "I have sinned!" But this is the language of impenitent misery. It is of the same nature as that of Cain: "My punishment is heavier than I can bear!" This spirit is often apparent in persons under first convictions, or when brought low by adversity or drawing near to death; all intent on bewailing their misery, but insensible to the evil of their sin. To what a condition has sin reduced us! Stripped naked to our shame, we are afraid to meet the kindest and best of Beings! Oh reader! we must now be clothed with a better righteousness than our own, or how shall we stand before him!

Ver. 11. Adam began, as I have said, with the *effects* of his sin; but God directed him to the cause of those effects.—Naked! How came such a thought into thy mind? The nakedness of thy body with which I created thee, was no nakedness: neither fear nor shame attached to that. What meanest thou by being naked? Still there is no confession. The truth will not come out without a direct inquiry on the subject. Here then it follows: "Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat?" Thus the sinner stands convicted. Now we might suppose he would have fallen at the feet of his Maker, and have pleaded guilty. But oh the hardening nature of sin!

Ver. 12. Here is, it is true, a confession of his sin. It comes out at last: "I did eat;" but with what a circuitous, extenuating preamble, a preamble which makes bad worse. The first word is, *The woman;* ay, the woman; it was not my fault, but hers. "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me." It was not I, it was *thou thyself!* If thou hadst not given this woman to be with me, I should have continued obedient.—Nay, and as if he suspected that the Almighty did not notice his plea sufficiently, he repeats it emphatically: "*She* gave me, and I did eat!" Such a confession was infinitely worse than none. Yet such is the spirit of fallen man to this day: It was not I . . . . it was my wife, or my husband, or my acquaintance, that persuaded me; or it was my situation in life, in which *thou* didst place me!—Thus "the foolishness of man perverteth his way, and his heart fretteth against the Lord."

It is worthy of notice that God makes *no answer* to these perverse excuses.—They were unworthy an answer. The Lord proceeds, like an aggrieved friend who would not multiply words: I see how it is: stand aside!

Ver. 13. Next the woman is called and examined: "What is this thou hast done?" The question implies that it was no trifling thing; and the effects which have followed, and will follow, confirm it. But let us hear the woman's answer. Did she plead guilty? The circumstance of her being first in the transgression, and the tempter of her husband, one should have thought, would have shut her mouth at least; and, being also of the weaker sex, it might have been expected that she would not have gone on to provoke the vengeance of her Creator. But lo! she also shifts the blame: "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat." I was deceived. I did not mean evil; but was drawn into it through the wiles of an evil being.—Such is the excuse which multitudes make to this day, when they can find no better:—The devil tempted me to it! Still God continues his forbearance:—makes no answer; but orders her as it were, to stand aside.

Ver. 14. And now the serpent is addressed: but mark the difference. Here is no question put to him, but merely a doom pronounced. Wherefore? Because no mercy was designed to be shown him. He is treated as an avowed and sworn enemy. There was no doubt *wherefore* he had done it, and therefore no reason is asked of his conduct.

The workings of conviction in the minds of men are called *the strivings of the Spirit*, and afford a hope of mercy. Though they are no certain sign of grace received (as there was nothing good at present in our first parents,) yet they are the workings of a merciful God, and prove that he has not given over the sinner to hopeless ruin. But the serpent has nothing to expect but a fearful looking for of judgment.

The form under which Satan is cursed is that of *the serpent.* To a superficial reader it might appear that the vengeance of Heaven was directed against the animal, distinguishing him from all cattle, subjecting him to a most abject life, condemning him to creep upon his belly, and of course to have his food besmeared with dust. But was God angry with the serpent? No: but as under that form Satan had tempted the woman, so that shall be the form under which he shall receive his doom. The spirit of the sentence appears to be this—Cursed art thou above all creatures, and above every thing that God hath made. Miserable shalt thou be to an endless duration!—Some have thought, and the passage gives countenance to the idea, that the state of fallen angels was not hopeless till now. If it had the curse could only have added a greater degree of misery.

DISCOURSE VI.

THE CURSE OF SATAN, INCLUDING A BLESSING TO MAN—EFFECTS OF THE FALL.

Gen. iii. 15—24.

VER. 15. By all that had hitherto been said and done, God appears to have concealed from man who was his tempter; and for this reason among others, to have pronounced the doom on Satan under the form of a curse upon the serpent. By this we may learn that it is of no account, as to the criminality of sin, whence it comes, or by whom or what we are tempted to it. If we choose it, it is ours, and we must be accountable for it.

But mark the wisdom and goodness of God: as under the form of cursing the serpent he had pronounced a most tremendous doom on the tempter, so under the form of this doom is covertly intimated a design of mercy the most transcendent to the tempted! If man had been in a suitable state of mind, the promise might have been *direct*, and addressed to him; but he was not: for his heart, whatever it might be afterwards, was as yet hardened against God. It was fit, therefore, that whatever designs of mercy were entertained concerning him, or his posterity, they should not be given in the form of a promise to him, but of threatning to Satan. The situation of Adam and Eve at this time was like that of sinners under the preaching of the gospel. The intimation concerning the Woman's Seed would indeed imply that she and her husband should live in the world, that she should bring forth children, and that God would carry on an opposition to the cause of evil; but it does not ascertain their *salvation;* and if there appear nothing more in their favor in the following part of the history than what has hitherto appeared, we shall have no good ground to conclude that either of them is gone to heaven. The Messiah might come as the Saviour of sinners, and might descend from them after the flesh, and yet they might have no portion in him.

But let us view this famous passage more particularly, and that in the light in which it is here represented, as *a threatning to the serpent.* This threatning does not so much respect the *person* of the grand adversary of God and man as his *cause* and *kingdom* in the world. He will be punished in his person at the time appointed; but this respects the manifestation of the Son of God to destroy his *works.* There are four things here intimated, each of which is worthy of notice. 1. The ruin of Satan's cause was to be accomplished by one in human nature. This must have been not a little mortifying to his pride. If he must fall, and could have had his choice as to the mode, he might rather have wished to have been crushed by the immediate hand of God; for however terrible that hand might be, it would be less humiliating than to be subdued by one of a nature inferior to his own. The human nature especially appears to have become odious in his eyes. It is possible that the rejoicings of eternal wisdom over man were known in heaven, and first excited his envy; and that his attempt to ruin the human race was an act of revenge. If so, there was a peculiar fitness that from *man* should proceed his overthrow. 2. It was to be accomplished by the seed of the *woman.* This would be more humiliating still. Satan had made use of her to accomplish his purposes, and God would defeat his schemes through the same medium; and by how much he had despised and abused her, in making her the instrument of drawing her husband aside, by so much would he be mortified in being overcome by one of her descendants. 3. The victory should be obtained, not only by the Messiah himself, but by all his adherents. The seed of the woman, though it primarily referred to him, yet, being opposed to "the seed of the serpent," includes all that believe in him. And there is little or no doubt that the account in Rev. xii. 17, has allusion to this passage: "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." Now, if it were mortifying for Satan to be overcome by the Messiah himself, considered as the seed of the woman, how much more when, in addition to this, every individual believer shall be made to come near, and as it were set his feet upon the neck of his enemy! Finally: Though it should be a long war, and the cause of the serpent would often be successful, yet in the end it should be utterly ruined. The *head* is the *seat of life*, which the *heel* is not: by this language, therefore, it is intimated that the life of Christ's cause should not be affected by any part of Satan's opposition; but that the life of Satan's cause should by that of Christ. For this purpose is he manifested in human nature, that he may *destroy* the works of the devil; and he will never desist till he have utterly crushed his power.

Now, as the threatening against Babylon conveyed good news to the church, so this threatening against the old serpent is full of mercy to men. But for this enmity which God would put into the woman's seed against him, he would have every thing his own way, and every child of man would have had his portion with him and his angels.

From the whole, we see that Christ is the foundation and substance of all true re-

ligion since the fall of man, and therefore, that the only way of salvation is by faith in him. We see also the importance of a decided attachment to him and his interest. There are two great armies in the world, Michael and his angels warring against the dragon and his angels; and according to the side we take, such will be our end.

Ver. 16—19. The sentence of the woman, and of the man, which follows, like the rest, is under a veil. Nothing but temporal evils are mentioned; but these are not the whole. Paul teaches us that, by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to *condemnation*; and such a condemnation as stands opposed to *justification of life*.—Rom. v. 18. See on chap. iv. 11, 12. The womans load in this life was "sorrow in bearing children," and "subjection to her husband." The command to be fruitful and multiply might originally, for aught I know, include some degree of pain; but now it should be "greatly multipled:" and there was doubtless a natural subordination in innocency; but through sin woman becomes comparatively a slave. This is especially the case where sin reigns uncontrolled, as in heathen and Mahomedan countries. Christianity, however, so far as it operates, counteracts it: restoring woman to her original state, that of a friend and companion. See on chap. ii. 18—25. The sentence on man points out to him wherein consisted his sin; namely, in hearkening to the voice of his wife, rather than to God. What a solemn lesson does this teach us against loving the creature more than the Creator, and hearkening to any counsel to the rejection of his! And, with respect to his punishment, it is worthy of notice that as that of Eve was common to her daughters, so that of Adam extends to the whole human race. The *ground* is cursed for his sake—cursed with barrenness. God would, as it were, take no delight in blessing it; as well he might not, for all would be perverted to and become the food of rebellion. The more he should bless the earth, the more wicked would be its inhabitants. Man also himself is doomed to wretchedness upon it: he should drag on the few years that he might live in sorrow and misery, of which the *thorns and thistles* which it should spontaneously produce, were but emblems. God had given him before to eat of *the fruit of the trees of the garden*; but now he must be expelled thence, and take his portion with the brutes, and live upon *the herb of the field*. He was allowed *bread*, but it should be by the *sweat of his face*; and this is the lot of the great body of mankind. The end of this miserable state of existence was that he should return to his native *dust*. Here the sentence leaves him. A veil is, at present, drawn over a future world: but we elsewhere learn that at what time "the flesh returns to dust, the spirit returns to God who gave it;" and that the same sentence which appointed man "once to die" added, "but after this the judgement."

It is painful to trace the different parts of this melancholy sentence, and their fulfilment in the world to this day: yet there is a bright side even to this dark cloud. Through the promised Messiah a great many things pertaining to the curse are not only counteracted, but become blessings. Under his glorious reign "the earth shall yield its increase, and God, our own God, delight in blessing us." And while its fruitfulness is withheld, this has a merciful tendency to stop the progress of sin; for if the whole earth were like the plains of Sodom in fruitfulness, which are compared to the garden of God, its inhabitants would be as Sodom and Gomorrah in wickedness. The necessity of hard labor, too, in obtaining a subsistence, which is the lot of the far greater part of mankind, tends more than a little, by separating men from each other, and depressing their spirits, to restrain them from the excesses of evil. All the afflictions of the present life contain in them a motive to look upward for a better portion: and death itself is a monitor to warn them to prepare to meet their God. These are things suited to a *sinful* world: and where they are sanctified, as they are to believers in Christ, they become real blessings. To them they are "light afflictions," and last "but for a moment;" and while they do last, "work for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." To them, in short, death itself is introductory to everlasting life.

Ver. 20. Adam's wife seems hitherto to have been known only by the name of *woman*; but now he calls her *Eve*, that is *life, living*, or *the mother of all living*. He might possibly have understood from the beginning, that the sentence of death would not prevent the existence of the human race, or, if not, what had been said of the woman's seed would at least satisfy him on the subject.

But it is generally supposed, and there seems to be ground for the supposition, that in calling his wife *life* or *living*, he intended more than that she would be the mother of all mankind; that it is expressive of his faith in the promise of her victorious Seed destroying, what Satan had succeeded in introducing—*death*, and that thus she should be the means of *immortal life* to all who should live in him. If such was his meaning, we may consider this as the first evidence in favor of his being renewed in the spirit of his mind.

Ver. 21. By the coats of skins wherewith the Lord God clothed them, it seems

to be implied that animals were slain, and, as they were not at that time slain for food, it is highly probable they were slain for sacrifice, especially as this practice is mentioned in the life of Abel. Sacrifices therefore appear to have been ordained of God to teach man his desert, and the way in which he must be saved. It is remarkable that the clothing of Adam and Eve is ascribed to *the Lord God*, and that it appears to have succeeded the slender covering wherewith they had attempted to cover themselves. Is it not natural to conclude that God only can hide our moral nakedness, and that the way in which he does it is by covering us with the righteousness of our atoning sacrifice?

Ver. 22. This ironical reflection is expressive of both indignation and pity.—Man is become wonderfully wise! Unhappy creature! He has forever forfeited my favor, which is life, and, having lost the thing signified, let him have no access to the sign. He has broken my covenant: let neither him nor his posterity henceforward expect to regain it by any obedience of theirs.—See on Chap. ii. 9.

Ver. 23, 24. God is determined that man shall not so much as dwell in the garden where the tree of life grows, but be turned out as into the wide world. He shall no longer live upon the delicious fruits of Eden, but be driven to seek his food among the beasts of the field; and, to show the impossibility of his ever regaining that life which he had lost, "cherubim and a flaming sword" are placed to guard it. Let this suffice to impress us with that important truth, "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified;" and to direct us to a tree of life which has no flaming sword to prevent our access. Yet even in this, as in the other threatenings, we may perceive a mixture of mercy. Man had rendered his days *evil*, and God determines they shall be but *few*. It is well for us that a life of sin and sorrow is not immortal.

DISCOURSE VII.

THE OFFERINGS OF CAIN AND ABEL.

Gen. iv. 1—8.

HAVING seen the origin of sin in our world, we have now the origin and progress of things as they at present are among mankind, or of the world as it now is.

Ver. 1. Adam has by his wife a son, who is called Cain; viz. *a possession* or *acquisition; for*, said Eve, "I have gotten a man from the Lord!" many learned men have rendered it *a man, the Lord;* and it is not very improbable that she should understand "the seed of the woman" of her immediate offspring; but if so, she was sadly mistaken! However, it expresses what we have not seen before, i. e. Eve's *faith* in the promise. Even though she should have had no reference to the Messiah, yet it shows that she eyed God's hand in what was given her, and viewed it as a great blessing, especially considering what a part she had acted. In this she sets an example to parents to reckon their children "a heritage from the Lord." But she also affords an example of the uncertainty of human hopes. Cain, so far from being a comfort to his parents, proved a wicked man; yea, a pattern of wickedness; held up like Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, as a warning to others: "Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother!" The joys attending the birth of a child require to be mixed with trembling; "for who knoweth whether he shall be a wise man or a fool?"

Ver. 2. Eve bears Adam another son, who was called *Abel*, or *Hebel*. In these names we probably see the partiality of parents for their first born children. Abel signifies *vanity*, or *a vanishing vapor*. Probably he was not so goodly a child in appearance as Cain, and did not seem likely to live long. The hearts and hopes of the parents did not seem to centre in him, but in his brother. But God seeth not as man seeth. In bestowing his blessing, he has often crossed hands, as Jacob did in blessing Ephraim and Manasseh. "He chooseth the base things of the world, that no flesh should glory in his presence." These two brothers were of different occupations; one a husbandman, and the other a shepherd; both primitive employments, and both very proper.

Ver. 3—5. In process of time the two brothers both present their offerings to God; this speaks something in favor of their parents, who had brought them up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Ainsworth renders it, "At the end of the days," and understands it of the end of the year, which was then in autumn, the time of the gathering-in of the harvest and the vintage. The institution of a solemn feast among the Israelites on this occasion (Exod. xxiii. 16,) seems therefore to have borne a near resemblance to that which was practised from the beginning.

In the offerings of these two first-born sons of man, we see the essential difference between spiritual worship and that which is merely formal. As to the *matter* of which their offerings were composed, it may be thought there was nothing particularly defective: each brought what he had

There is indeed no mention made of Cain's being of the *best* of the kind, which is noticed of Abel's. And, if he neglected this, it was a sign that his heart was not much in it. He might also, no doubt, have obtained a lamb out of his brother's flock for an expiatory sacrifice. But the chief difference is that which is noticed by the apostle: "By *faith* Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." Cain's offering was just what a self-righteous heart would offer: it proceeded on the principle that there was no breach between him and his Creator, so as to require any confession of sin, or respect to an atonement. Such offerings abound among us; but they are "without faith," and therefore it is impossible they should please God. The offering of Abel I need not describe: suffice it to say, it was the reverse of that presented by Cain. It was the best of the kind, and included an expiatory sacrifice.

The result was, "the Lord had respect to Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain and his offering he had not respect." The one was probably consumed by fire from heaven: the other not so. This we know was afterwards a common token of the divine acceptance.—Lev. ix. 24. Psa. xx. 3, margin. The *order* of things is worthy of notice. God first accepted Abel, and then his offering. If he had been justified on the ground of his good deeds, the order should have been reversed: but, believing in the Messiah, he was accepted for his sake; and, being so, his works were well-pleasing in the sight of God. And, as Abel was accepted as a believer, so Cain was rejected as an unbeliever. Being such, the Lord had no respect to him: he was under the curse, and all he did was abhorred in his eyes.

The rejection of Cain and his offering operated upon him very powerfully. If the love of God had been in him, he would have fallen before him, as Joshua and his brethren did when Israel was driven back; and have pleaded, "Show me wherefore thou contendest with me." But "he was *wroth, and his countenance fell.*" This is just what might be expected from a self-righteous, proud spirit, who thought so highly of his offering as to imagine that God must needs be pleased with it, and with him on account of it. He was *very* wroth; and that no doubt against God himself, as well as against his brother. He went in high spirits, like the Pharisee to the temple, but came away dejected and full of foul passions, of which his fallen countenance was but the index.

Ver. 6, 7. Cain having returned home, the Lord, perhaps in a dream or vision of the night, expostulated with him. "Why art thou wroth?"—What cause is there for this enmity against thy Maker, and envy against thy brother?—Doubtless, he thought that he had a cause; but when interrogated of God he found none. "If thou doest well shalt thou not be accepted? And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him." By *doing well* he means doing as Abel did, offering in faith, which is the only well doing among sinful creatures. If Cain had believed in the Messiah, there was forgiveness for him, no less than for his brother; and he should also have had the excellence attached to the first-born, which he reckoned he had a right to, and the loss of which galled him. "If thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door;*" unforgiven, to go down with thee to the grave, and to rise with thee in judgment.

Observe how things are ordered in the dealings of God with men. Abel was not accepted of God *for* his well-doing; neither faith nor obedience was that *on account of which* he was justified, but the righteousness of him in whom he believed. Yet it was *in* well-doing that he obtained eternal life.—Rom. ii. 7. Though faith was not the *cause* of the Lord's having respect to him, nor his having offered in faith the cause of his having respect to his works; yet each was a necessary concomitant. And this, while it secures the interests of righteousness in the righteous, serves to silence the wicked, and make them feel the justice of their condemnation. Thus, at the last judgment, though every one who is saved will be saved by grace only, yet all will be judged according to their works. Things will be so ordered that the righteous will have nothing to boast of, and the wicked nothing to complain of, inasmuch as the decision in both cases will proceed according to character.

But though Cain was silenced by the Almighty, yet his malice was not subdued but rather inflamed. If the life of God had been within his reach he would have killed him: but this he could not do. From that time, therefore, his dark soul meditated revenge upon Abel, as being God's favorite, his own rival, and the only object within his power. This is the first instance of the enmity of the seed of the serpent breaking out against the seed of the woman; but not the last! Observe the subtilty and treachery with which it was accomplished: "Cain talked with Abel his brother." He talked with him, probably, in a very familiar manner, as though he had quite forgotten the affair which had lately hurt his mind; and, when they were engaged in conversation, persua-

* This clause which is in the middle of verse 7, I suppose should be in parenthesis. I have therefore placed the first and last in connection, and introduced this after them, by which the sense is clear.

ded him to take a walk with him into his field; and having got him away from the family, he murdered him! Oh Adam! thou didst murder an unborn world, and now thou shalt see some of the fruits of it in thine own family! Thou hast never before witnessed a human death: go, see the first victim of the king of terrors in the mangled corpse of Abel thy son!—Poor Abel!—Shall we pity him? In one view we must, but in others he is an object of envy. He was the first of the noble army of martyrs, the first of human kind who entered the abodes of the blessed, and the first instance of death being subservient to Christ. When the serpent had drawn man into sin, and exposed him to its threatened penalty, he seemed to have obtained *the power of death*; and, had man been left under the ruins of the fall, he would have been continually walking through the earth, arm in arm, as it were with the monster, the one taking the bodies and the other the souls of men. But the woman's seed is destined to overcome him. By death he destroyed "him who had the power of death, and delivered them who" must otherwise, "through fear of death," have been "all their life-time subject to bondage."—Heb. ii. 14, 15.

DISCOURSE VIII.

CAIN'S PUNISHMENT AND POSTERITY.

Gen. iv. 9—24.

VER. 9. We have seen the tragical end of righteous Abel; but what becomes of the murderer? Probably he had hid the dead body of his brother to elude detection: but God will find him out. Jehovah said to Cain, "Where is Abel thy brother?" What a cutting question! The words *thy brother* would remind him of the tender ties of flesh and blood which he had broken; and, if he had any feeling of conscience left in him, must pierce him to the quick. But oh, how black, how hardened is the state of his mind! Mark his answer. First, The falsehood of it—"I know not." We feel astonished that a man can dare to lie in the presence of his Maker: yet how many lies are uttered before him by formalists and hypocrites! Secondly, The insolence of it—"Am I my brother's keeper?" This man had no fear of God before his eyes; and, where this is wanting, regard to man will be wanting also. Even natural affection will be swallowed up in selfishness. Supposing he had not known where his brother was, it did not follow that he had no interest in his preservation: but he did know, and, instead of being his keeper, had been his murderer!

Ver. 10. "And he said, What hast thou done?" Ah, what indeed! This was the question put to Eve; and sooner or later it will be put to every sinner, and conscience must answer to it too! But Cain refuses to speak: be it so; there needs no confession to substantiate his guilt. His *brother's blood* had already done this! *Blood* has a voice that will speak; yea, that will "cry to heaven from the ground" for vengeance on him who sheds it; and a *brother's* blood especially. What a scene will open to view at the last judgment, when the earth shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain! And if such was the cry of Abel's blood, what must have been that of the blood which was shed on Calvary? We should have thought that blood must have called for vengeance seven-fold; and in one view it did so, but in another it speaks "better things than that of Abel."

Ver. 11, 12. But let us notice the doom of Cain. He was cursed from the earth; it should in future refuse to yield him its wonted fruits, and he should be a fugitive and a vagabond in it. Three things are here observable: 1. By the sovereign will of the Lord of All, his life was spared. Afterwards a positive law was made by the same authority, that "whosoever should shed man's blood, by man should his blood be shed." But at present, for reasons of state in the breast of the King of kings, the murderer shall be reprieved. If he had died by the hand of man, it must have been either by an act of private revenge, which would have increased bloodshed; or Adam himself must have been the executioner of his son, from which trial of "quenching the coal that was left" God might graciously exempt him. 2. The curse which attached to his life, like that of our first parents, is confined to the present state. There is no reason in the world to suppose that the punishment of such a crime would actually be so, any more than others, nor others any more than this; but a future life was at that time sparingly revealed, and almost every thing concealed under the veil of temporal good and evil. 3. It contains a special addition to that which was denounced on Adam. The earth was cursed to him; but Cain was "cursed from the earth." It had been his brother's friend, by affording a kind of sanctuary for his blood, which he had pursued; but to him it should be an enemy, not only refusing its wonted fruits, but even a place whereon to rest his foot, or in which to hide his guilty head!

Ver. 13, 14. This tremendous sentence draws forth an answer from the murderer. There is a great change since he spoke last, but not for the better. All the differ-

ence is, instead of his high tone of insolence, we perceive him sinking into the last stage of depravity, sullen desperation. Behold here a finished picture of impenitent misery! What a contrast to the fifty-first Psalm! There the evil dwelt upon and pathetically lamented is sin; but here it is only punishment. See how he expatiates upon it . . . . Driven from the face of the earth . . . . deprived of God's favor and blessing, and, in a sort, of the means of hope (ver. 16) . . . . a wanderer and an outcast from men . . . . to all which his fears add,—Wherever I am, by night or by day, my life will be in perpetual danger! Truly it was a terrible doom, a kind of hell upon earth. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!"

Ver. 15. From the last part of what his fears foreboded, however, God was pleased to exempt him; yet not in mercy, but in judgment. He shall not die, but live, a monument of divine justice. If he had died, his example might soon have been forgotten; but mankind shall see and fear. "Slay them not, lest my people forget: scatter them by thy power and bring them down, O Lord!" God is not obliged to send a sinner to the place of the damned, in order to punish him: he can call his name Magor-missabib, and render him a terror to himself and all about him.—Jer. xx. 3, 4. What the *mark* was which was set upon Cain we know not, nor does it behove us to inquire: whatever it was, it amounted to a safe passage through the world, so far as respected a punishment from man for his present crime.

Ver. 16. And now, having obtained a reprieve, he retires in the true spirit of a reprobate, and tries to forget his misery. It shocked him at first to be driven out from God's face, by which perhaps he meant from all connection with the people and worship of God, from the means of grace, and so from the hope of mercy; but in a little time the sensation subsides, and he resolves to enjoy the present world as well as he can. He goes out "from the presence of the Lord," takes a final leave of God and his worship and his people, and cares no more about them. If this be the meaning of the words (and I know of no other so probable,) it wears a very favorable appearance with respect to the state of things in Adam's family. It shows that the worship of God was there carried on, and that God was with them. Indeed, if it were not carried on there, it appears to have had no existence in the world, which there is no reason to believe was ever the case when once it had begun. With respect to Cain, the country whither he went is called *Nod*, or *Naid*, which signifies *a vagabond*. It was not so called before, but on his account; as who should say, *The land of the vagabond.*

Ver. 17. He was married before this, though we are not told to whom. Doubtless it was to one of Adam's daughters, mentioned in chap. v. 4, which near affinity, though since forbidden, was then absolutely necessary. Of her, in the land of the vagabond, he had a son, whom he called Enoch; not him who *walked with God*, but one of the same name. It signifies *taught* or *dedicated:* it is rather difficult to account for his calling the child by this name after what had taken place. Possibly it might be one of those effects of education which are often seen in the ungodly children of religious parents. When he himself was born, he was, as we have seen, accounted *an acquisition*, and was doubtless *dedicated*, and as he grew up *taught* by his parents. Of this it is likely he had made great account, priding himself in it, as many graceless characters do in being the children of the righteous: and now, having a child of his own, he might wish to stamp upon him this mark of honor, though it was merely nominal. After this, Cain built or was building, a city: a very small one no doubt, as need required. He began what his family, as they increased, perfected; and called it after the name of his son. Thus he amused himself as well as he could. The divine forbearance probably hardened him in his security, as it commonly does the ungodly. "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the hearts of the sons of men are fully set in them to do evil."

Ver. 18—24. Next follow the generations of Cain, which present a few general observations.—1. Nothing good is said of any one of them; but, heathen like, they appear to have lost all fear of God and regard to man. 2. Two or three of them become famous for arts; one was a shepherd, another a musician, and another a smith; all very well in themselves, but things in which the worst of men may excel. Some have supposed that we are indebted to revelation for all this kind of knowledge. Had it been said we are indebted to our Creator for it, it had been true; for to his instruction the discretion of the husbandman is ascribed.—Isa. xxviii. 24—29. But revelation was given for greater and better objects; namely, to furnish not the man, but "the man of God." 3. One of them was infamous for his wickedness; namely; Lamech. He was the first who violated the law of marriage: a man who gave loose to his appetites, and lived a kind of lawless life. Among other evils, he followed the example of his ancestor Cain. It is not said whom he slew; but he himself says it was *a young man*. This is the first instance,

but not the last, in which sensuality and murder are connected. Nor did he barely follow Cain's example: but seems to have taken encouragement from the divine forbearance towards him, and to have presumed that God would be still more forbearing to him. Thus one sinner takes liberty to sin from the suspension of judgment towards another.

Here ends the account of cursed Cain. We hear no more of his posterity, unless it be as tempters to "the sons of God," till they were all swept away by the deluge!

DISCOURSE IX.

THE GENERATIONS OF ADAM.

Gen. iv. 25, 26; v.

We have of late met with little else than the operations of sin and misery: here I hope we shall find something that will afford us pleasure. Adam had lived to see grievous things in his family. At length, about a hundred and thirty years after the creation, Eve bare him another son. Him his mother called Seth; that is, set, or appointed; "for God," said she, "hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew." The manner in which the mother of mankind speaks on this occasion is much in favor of her personal religion. The language implies that though at first she had doted on Cain, yet as they grew up, and discovered their dispositions, Abel was preferred. He was the child in whom all the hopes of the family seem to have concentrated; and, therefore, when he fell a sacrifice to his brother's cruelty, it was considered as a very heavy loss. She was not without a son before Seth was born, for Cain was yet alive: but he was considered as none, or as worse than none; and therefore, when Seth was born, she hoped to find in him a successor to Abel: and so it proved; for this appears to have been the family in which the true religion was preserved in those times. At the birth of Enos, which was a hundred and five years after that of his father Seth, it is remarked with emphasis by the sacred historian—"*Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord.*" This cheering information doubtless refers to the families in connection with which it is spoken, and denotes, not that there had been no calling upon the Lord till that time, but that thence true religion assumed a more *visible* form; the seed of the woman, afterwards called "the sons of God," assembling together to worship him, while the seed of the serpent might very probably be employed in deriding them.

From the genealogy in chap. v. I shall barely offer the following remarks:

1. It is a very honorable one. Not only did patriarchs and prophets, and the church of God for many ages, descend from it, but the Son of God himself according to the flesh; and, to show the fulfilment of the promises and prophecies concerning him, is the principal reason of the genealogy having been recorded.

2. Neither Cain nor Abel has any place in it. Abel was slain before he had any children, and therefore *could not;* and Cain by his sin had covered his name with infamy, and therefore *should not.* Adam's posterity therefore, after a lapse of one hundred and thirty years, must begin anew.

3. The honor done to Seth and his posterity was of grace; for he is said to have been born *in Adam's likeness and after his image;* a phrase which I believe, is always used to express the qualities of the mind, rather than the shape of the body. Man was made "after the image of God;" but, this being lost, they are born corrupt, the children of a corrupt father. What is true of all mankind is here noted of Seth, because he was reckoned as Adam's firstborn. He therefore, like all others, was by nature a child of wrath; and what he or any of his posterity were different from this, they were by grace.

4. The extraordinary length of human life at that period was wisely ordered; not only for the peopling of the world, but for the supplying of the defect of a written revelation. From the death of Adam to the call of Abram, a period of about eleven hundred years, there were living either Enoch, Lamech, Noah, or Shem: besides other godly persons, who were their contemporaries, and who would feelingly relate to those about them the events of the creation, the fall and recovery of man.

5. Notwithstanding the longevity of the antediluvians, it is recorded of them all, in their turn, that they *died.* Though the stroke of death was slow in its approach, yet it was sure. If man could live to a thousand years, yet he must die; and, if he die in sin, he will be accursed.

6. Though many of the names in this genealogy are passed over without any thing been said of their piety, yet we are not hence to infer that they were impious. Many might be included among them who "called upon the name of the Lord," and who are denominated "the sons of God," though nothing is personally related of them.

7. Two of them are distinguished for eminent Godliness; or, as it is here called,

walking with God; namely, Enoch and Noah. Both these holy men are enrolled in the list of worthies in the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Let us look a little intensely at the life of the former of these worthies, the shortest of all the lives, but surely the sweetest: "Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah, three hundred years."—"He walked with God, and was not; for God took him." This is one of those brief, impressive, descriptions of true religion with which the Scriptures abound. Its holy and progressive nature is here most admirably marked. "Enoch walked with God." He must then have been in a state of *reconciliation* with God; for two cannot walk together except they be agreed. He was what Paul infers from another sonsideration, *a believer.* Where this is not the case, whatever may be his outward conduct, the sinner walks contrary to God, and God to him. What an idea does it convey, also, of his setting God always before him, seeking to glorify him in every duty, and studying to show himself approved of him, whatever might be thought of his conduct by sinful men! Finally: What an idea does it convey of the communion which he habitually enjoyed with God! His conversation was in heaven while dwelling on the earth. God dwelt in him, and he in God!

"Enoch walked with God, after he begat Methuselah, three hundred years," and perhaps some time before that event. Religion with him, then, was not a transient feeling, but an habitual and abiding principle. In reviewing such a character, what Christian can forbear exclaiming, in the words of our Christian poet,

> "O for a closer walk with God,
> A calm and heavenly frame;
> A light, to shine upon the road
> That leads me to the Lamb?" *Cowper.*

Just so much as we have of this, so much we possess of true religion, and no more.

"Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him;" that is, as Paul explains it, "he was translated, that he should not see death." This singular favor conferred on Enoch, like the resurrection of Christ, might be designed to afford a sensible proof of a blessed immortality, which, for the want of a written revelation, might then be peculiarly necessary. He had warned the wicked of his day that "the Lord would come, with ten thousand of his holy ones, to execute judgment:" and now, however offensive his doctrine might have been to *them,* God, by exempting him from the common lot of men, will bear testimony that he hath pleased *him,* not only to the mind of Enoch, but to the world. It is possible, also, that the translation of this holy man might be conferred in order to show what would have been common to all had man persisted in his obedience—a translation from the earthly to the heavenly paradise.

With respect to Noah we shall have an account of his righteous life in the following chapters: at present we are only told of the circumstances of his birth, ver. 28—32. His father Lamech speaks, on this occasion, like a good man and a prophet. He called his son *Noah,* which signifies *rest;* "for this same," saith he, "shall comfort us concerning our work, and the toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed." Noah by building the ark, saved a remnant from the flood; and, by offering an acceptable sacrifice, obtained the promise that the ground should no more be cursed for man's sake, chap. viii. 21. As Lamech could have known this only by revelation, we may infer thence the sweet rest which divine truth affords to the believing mind from the toils and troubles of the present life; and if the birth of this child afforded comfort, in that he would save the world and remove the curse, how much more HIS who would be a greater Saviour, and remove a greater curse, by being HIMSELF an ark of salvation, and by offering "HIMSELF a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor!"

DISCOURSE X.

THE CAUSE OF THE DELUGE.

Gen. vi. 1—7.

VER. 1—3. When we read of men beginning to "call upon the name of the Lord," we entertained a hope of good times, and of comfort, as Lamech said, after toil and sorrow: but, alas, what a sad reverse! A general corruption overspreads the earth, and brings on a tremendous deluge, that sweeps them all, one family excepted, into oblivion.

First: We may remark the *occasion* of this general corruption, which was the increase of population. "When men began to multiply" they became more and more depraved: yet an increase of population is considered as a blessing to a country, and such it is in itself; but through man's depravity it often proves a curse. When men are collected in great numbers they whet one another to evil, which is the reason why sin commonly grows rankest in populous places. We were made to be helpers; but by sin we are become tempters of one another, drawing and being drawn into innumerable evils.

Secondly: Observe *the first step towards degeneracy*, which was *the uniting of the world and the church by mixed marriages:*—The sons of God and the daughters of men—the descendants of Seth and those of Cain—the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. The great end of marriage, in a good man, should not be to gratify his fancy, nor to indulge his natural inclinations, but to obtain a helper; and the same in a woman. We need to be helped on in our way to heaven, instead of being hindered and corrupted. Hence it was that, in the law, marriages with idolaters were forbidden (Deut. vii. 3, 4;) and hence Christian marriages were limited to those "in the Lord," 1 Cor. vii. 39. The examples which we have seen of the contrary have, by their effects, justified these injunctions. I would earnestly entreat serious young people, of both sexes, as they regard God's honor, their own spiritual welfare, and the welfare of the church of God, to avoid being unequally yoked together with unbelievers.

Thirdly: Observe *the great offence* that God took at this conduct, and the consequences which grew out of it: "The Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man," &c. Had the sons of God kept themselves to themselves, and preserved their purity, God would have spared the world for their sakes; but they mingled together, and became in effect one people. The old folks were in their account too bigoted, and it seemed much better for them to indulge a more liberal way of thinking and acting. But this, in the sight of God, was worse than almost any thing that had gone before it. He was more offended with the religious than with the irreligious part of them. Seeing they had become one people, he calls them all by one name, and that is *man*, without any distinction; and, in giving the reason why his Spirit should not always strive with man, special reference is had to their having become degenerate—It was for that *he also*, or *these also, were flesh;* that is, those who had been considered as the sons of God were become corrupt. God's Holy Spirit in his prophets had long strove or contended with the world (See Neh. ix. 30; 1 Pet. iii. 19, 20:) and, while the sons of God made a stand against their wickedness, God was with them, and the contest was kept up: but they having, like false allies, made a kind of separate peace, or rather gone over to the enemy, God will give up the war, let sin have a free course, and let them take the consequences! "*Bread-corn is bruised, because he will not ever be threshing it.*"

Fourthly: Observe *the long-suffering of God* amidst his displeasure: "*His days shall be a hundred and twenty years.*" This refers to the period of time which should elapse before the drowning of the world, "when," as an apostle expresses it, "the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing." All this time God *did* strive, or contend with them; but it seems without effect.

Ver. 4. Among various other evils which at that time prevailed, a spirit of ambition was predominant; a thirst of conquest and dominion; and of course, a flood of injuries, outrages, and oppressions. The case seems to have been this: Previously to the unhappy junction between the families of Cain and Seth, there were, among the former, *giants*, or men of great stature, who, tempted by their superior strength, set up for champions and heroes, and bore down all before them. Nor was the mischief confined to them: for *also after that*, when the two families had become one, as the children that were born unto them grew up, they emulated, as might be expected, not the virtues of their fathers, but the vices of their mothers, and particularly those of the gigantic and fierce heroes among their relations. Hence there sprang up a number of characters famous, or rather infamous, for their plunders and depredations. Such, in after times, was Nimrod, that "mighty hunter before the Lord."

Ver. 5. The church being thus corrupted, and in a manner lost in the world, there is nothing left to resist the torrent of depravity. *Man* appears now in his true character. The picture which is here drawn of him, though very affecting, is no more than just. If it had been drawn by the pen of a prejudiced, erring mortal, it might be supposed to exceed the truth; but that which was written was taken from the perfect and impartial survey of God. Hear ye who pretend that man is naturally virtuous! That the wickedness of man has in all ages, though at some periods more than others, been *great upon the earth*, can scarcely be called in question; but that "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart should be only evil, and that continually," is more than men in general will allow. Yet such is the account here given. Mark the affecting gradation. *Evil:* evil *without mixture;* "only evil." Evil *without cessation;* "continually." Evil from the very *fountain head of action;* "the imagination of the thoughts of the heart." Nor is it a description of certain vicious characters only, but of "man," as left to himself. And all this "God saw," who sees things as they are. This doctrine is fundamental to the gospel: the whole system of redemption rests upon it; and I suspect that every false scheme of religion which has been at any time advanced in the world, might be proved to have originated in the denial of it.

Ver. 6. The effect of this divine survey is described in language, taken it is true from the feelings of men, but unusually impressive. "It repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart!" We are not to attribute to an immutable mind the fickleness of man, nor to suppose that the omniscient Jehovah was really disappointed; but thus much we learn, that the wickedness of man is such as to mar all the works of God over which he is placed, and to render them worse than if there were none; so that, if he had not counteracted it by the death of Christ, there had better have been no world. In short, that any one but himself, on seeing his work thus marred and perverted, would have really repented, and wished from his heart that he had never made them! The words express, with an energy and impressiveness which it is probable nothing purely literal could have conveyed, the exceeding sinfulness and provoking nature of sin.

Ver. 7. From this cause proceeded the divine resolution to "destroy man from the face of the earth;" and to show the greatness of his sin, it is represented as extinguishing the paternal kindness of God as his Creator: "The Lord said, I will destroy man, *whom I have created*, from the face of the earth."—"He that *made them* would not have mercy on them, and he that *formed them* would show them no favor!" And further, to show his displeasure against man, the creatures which were subject to him should be destroyed with him. Thus, when Achan had transgressed, to render his punishment more impressive upon Israel, "his sons and daughters, and oxen, and asses, and sheep, and tent, and all that he had, were brought forth and with himself stoned with stones, and burnt with fire." However light man may make of sin during the time of God's forbearance, it will prove in the end to be an evil and bitter thing.

DISCOURSE XI.

NOAH FINDS FAVOR WITH GOD, AND IS DIRECTED TO BUILD THE ARK.

Gen. vi. 8—22.

By the foregoing account, it would seem as if the whole earth had become corrupt. In the worst of times, however, God has had a remnant that has walked with him; and over them he has in the most sore calamities directed a watchful eye. When God said, "I will destroy man, whom I have created, from the face of the earth," it seemed as if he would make an end of the human race. "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." Observe, 1. It is painful to find out one family, nay, it would seem but one person, out of all the professed sons of God, who stood firmly in this evil day. Some were dead, and others by mingling with the wicked had apostatised. 2. It is pleasant to find one upright man in a generation of the ungodly; a lily among thorns, whose lovely conduct would shine the brighter when contrasted with that of the world about him. It is a great matter to be faithful among the faithless. With all our helps from the society of good men, we find it difficult enough to keep on our way; but for an individual to set his face against the whole current of public opinion and custom requires and implies great grace. Yet that is the only true religion which walks as in the sight of God, irrespective of what is thought or done by others. Such was the resolution of Joshua, when the whole nation seemed to be turning aside from God: "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." 3. It is encouraging to find that one upright man was singled out from the rest when the world was to be destroyed. If he had been destroyed with the world, God could have taken him to himself, and all would have been well with him; but then there had been no public expression of what he loved; as well as of what he hated.

Ver. 9. As Noah was to be the father of the new world, we have here a particular account of him. His "generations" mean an account of him and his family; of what he was, and of the things which befel him.—See chap. xxxvii. 2. The first thing said of him, as being the greatest, is, "He was a just, or righteous, man, and perfect in his generations, walking with God." Character is of greater importance than pedigree. But notice particularly:

1. He was *just*. He was the first man who was so called, though not the first who was so. In a legal sense; a just man is one that doeth good and sinneth not; but, since the fall, no such man has existed upon earth, save the man Christ Jesus. If any of us be denominated just, it must be in some other sense; and what this is the Scriptures inform us when they represent *the just as living by faith*. Such was the life of Noah, and therefore he is reckoned among the believing worthies.—Heb. xi. 7. And the faith by which he is justified before God operated in a way of righteousness, which rendered him just before men. He is called "a preacher of righteousness," and he lived according to his doctrine.—2. Pet. ii. 5.

2. He was *perfect* in his generations. The term in this connection is not to be ta-

ken absolutely, but as expressive, not only of sincerity of heart, but of a *decidedness* for God, like that of Caleb, who followed the Lord *fully*. It does not merely distinguish good men from bad men, but good men from one another. It is said of Solomon, that his "heart was not *perfect* with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father." Alas, how much of this half-hearted religion there is among us! Instead of serving the Lord with a perfect heart and a willing mind, we halt as it were between two, the love of God and the love of the world.

3. He *walked* with God. This is the same as was said of Enoch. It not only implies his being reconciled to God, and denotes his acknowledging him in all his ways, and enjoying communion with him in the discharge of duties, but is also expressive of the *continuity* and *progressive tendency* of true religion. Whatever he did, or wherever he went, God was before his eyes; nor did he ever think of leaving off till he should have finished his course.

Ver. 10. From Noah's character the sacred writer proceeds to his descendants. He had three sons Shem, Ham, and Japhet. These afterwards became the patriarchs of the world, between whose posterity the three great divisions of Asia, Africa, and Europe have been principally divided. Thus much at present for the favored family.

Ver. 11. Here we have the charge against the old world repeated as the ground of what should follow. If succeeding generations inquire, Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto the work of his hands? What meaneth the heat of this great anger? be it known that it was not for a small matter: "The earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence." Here are two words used to express the wickedness of the world, *corruption* and *violence*, both of which are repeated and dwelt upon in verses 12, 13. The *former* refers, I conceive, to their having debased and depraved the true religion. This was the natural consequence of the junction between the sons of God and the daughters of men. Whenever the church is become one with the world, the corruption of true religion has invariably followed: for, if wicked men have a religion, it must needs be such as to accord with their inclinations. Hence arose all the heresies of the early ages of Christianity; hence the grand Romish apostacy; and in short every corruption of the true religion, in past or present times. The *latter* of these terms is expressive of their conduct towards one another. The fear of God and the regard of man are closely connected; and where the one is given up the other will soon follow. Indeed, it appears to be the decree of the eternal God, that, when men have cast off his fear, they shall not continue long in amity with one another. And he has only to let the laws of nature take their course in order to effect it; for when men depart from God, the principle of union is lost, and self-love governs every thing: and, being "*lovers of their own selves*," they will be "covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." Such a flood of wickedness is at any time sufficient to deluge a world with misery. If these things did not then break forth in national wars as they do with us, it was merely because the world was not as yet divided into nations: the springs of domestic and social life were poisoned; the tender ties of blood and affinity violated; and quarrels, intrigues, oppression, robberies, and murders pervaded the abodes of man.

From the influence of corruption in producing violence, and bringing on the deluge, we may see the importance of pure religion, and those who adhere to it, to the well-being of society. They are the preserving principle, the salt of the earth; and when they are banished, or in any way become extinct, the consequences will be soon felt. While the sons of God were kept together and continued faithful, for their sakes God would not destroy the world; but, when reduced to a single family, he would, as in the case of Lot, take that away and destroy the rest. The late convulsions in a neighboring nation may, I apprehend, be easily traced to this cause: all their violence originated in the corruption of the true religion. About a hundred and thirty years ago, the law which protected the reformation in that country was repealed, and almost all the religious people were either murdered or banished.—The consequence was, as might have been expected, the great body of the nation, princes, priests and people, sunk into infidelity. The Protestant religion, while it continued, was the salt of the state; but when banished, and superstition had nothing left to counteract it, things soon hastened to their crisis. Popery, aided by a despotic civil government, brought forth infidelity; and the child as soon as it grew up to maturity murdered its parents. If the principal part of the religious people in this or any other country, were driven away, the rest would soon become infidels and practical athiests; and, what every order and degree of men would have to expect from the prevalence of these principles, there is no want of examples to inform them.

Ver. 12, 13. The corruption and violence which overspread the earth attracted the notice of heaven. God knows at all times what is doing in our world; but his *looking* upon the earth denotes a special observance of it, as though he had instituted an inquiry into its affairs. Thus he is represented as "going down to Sodom, to see whether they had done altogether according to the cry of it, which was come up unto him." Such seasons of inquiry are the days of "inquisition for blood," and are so many days of judgment in miniature.

The inquiry being instituted, sentence is passed, and Noah is informed of it.—"God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me . . . . behold I will destroy them with the earth." In cases where individuals only, or even a majority, are wicked, and there is yet a great number of righteous characters, God often inflicts only a partial punishment: but, where a whole people are become corrupt, he has more than once made a full end of them. Witness the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the seven nations of Canaan; and thus it will be with the world when the righteous shall be gathered out of it.

Ver. 14.—16. As it was the design of God to make an exception in favor of his faithful servant Noah, he is directed to the use of an extraordinary means, namely, the building of the ark: a kind of ship, which, though not in the shape of ours, as not being intended for a voyage, should float on the surface of the waters and preserve him and his family alive in the midst of death. It is possible that this was the first floating fabric that was ever built. Its dimensions were amazing. Reckoning the cubit at only a foot and a half, which is supposed to be somewhat less than the truth, it was a hundred and fifty yards long, twenty-five yards wide, and fifteen yards deep; containing three stories, or, as we should call them, decks, each five yards in depth. It had a window also, it should seem, from end to end, a foot and a half deep, for light, and perhaps for air.*

Ver. 17. When Joseph was called to interpret the dream of Pharaoh, he observed concerning its being *doubted* that it was "because the thing was established by God, and God would shortly bring it to pass;" and thus we may consider the repetition which is here given of the sentence: "Behold I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh wherein is the breath of life from under heaven."

Ver. 18—22. But though it was the purpose of God to make an end of the world that then was, yet he did not mean that the generations of men should here be terminated. A new world shall succeed, of which his servant Noah should be the Father. Thus when Israel had offended at Horeb, the Lord said unto Moses, "Let me alone, that I may destroy them, and I will make of thee a great nation." Hence pairs of every living creature were to go with Noah into the ark, to provide for futurity.

The terms in which this gracious design is intimated are worthy of special notice: "With thee will I establish my covenant." Observe three things in particular. 1. The leading ideas suggested by a covenant are those of *peace and good-will* between the parties, and, if differences have subsisted, forgiveness of the past and security for the future. Such were the friendly alliances between Abraham and Abimelech, Isaac and another Abimelech, and between Jacob and Laban. God was highly displeased with the world, and would therefore destroy that generation by a flood: but, when he should have done this, he would return in loving-kindness and tender mercies, and would look upon the earth with a propitious eye. Nor should they be kept in fearful expectation of being so destroyed again: for he would pledge his word no more to be wroth with them in such a way, nor to rebuke them forever. 2. In covenants wherein one or both of the parties had been offended, it was usual to *offer sacrifices*, in which a kind of atonement was made for past offences and a perfect reconciliation followed. Such were the covenants before referred to; and such, as we shall see at the close of the eighth chapter, was the covenant in question. "Noah offered sacrifices and the Lord smelled a sweet savor, and promised to curse the ground no more for man's sake." 3. In covenants which include a blessing on MANY, and them *unworthy*, it is Gods' ordinary method to bestow it *in reward* or *for the sake, of* ONE who was dear to him. God loves men, but he also loves righteousness: hence he delights to bestow his blessings in such a way as manifests his true character. If there had been any dependence on Noah's posterity, that they would all have walked in his steps, the covenant might have been established *with them*, as well as with him; but they would soon degenerate into idolatry and all manner of wickedness. If therefore he will bestow favor on them in such a way as to express his love of righteousness, it must be for their father Noah's sake, and in reward of his righteousness. To say, "With *thee* will I establish my covenant," was saying, in effect, I will not treat with thine ungodly posterity: whatever favor I show them, it shall be for thy sake.

* Noah's ark is said to have been equal to forty of our largest men of war.

It was on this principle that God made a covenant with Abram, in which he promised great blessings to his posterity. "As for me," saith he, "behold my covenant is with *thee*, and thou shalt be a father of many nations." Hence, in a great number of instances wherein mercy was shown to the rebellious Israelites, they were reminded that it was not for *their sakes*, but on account of *the covenant made with their father Abraham, and renewed with Isaac and Jacob.* It was upon this principle also that God made a covenant with David, promising that his seed should sit upon his throne forever. And this is expressed in much the same language as that of Noah and Abraham: "My covenant shall stand fast with him."—"Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before him." Solomon pleaded this at the dedication of the temple. Hezekiah also derived advantage from it; and, when the seed of David corrupted their way, the Lord reminded them that the favors which they enjoyed were not for their own sakes, but for his Name's sake, and for the covenant which he had made with David his servant.

After these remarks, I scarcely need say that, by these proceedings, God, even at this early period, was preparing the way for the redemption of his Son, by rendering the great principle on which it should proceed familiar to mankind. A very small acquaintance with the Scriptures will enable us to perceive the charming analogy between the language used in the covenant with Noah, Abram, David, &c., and that which respects the Messiah, "I will give *thee* for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages."—"It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation to the ends of the earth."—"Ask of me, and I will give *thee* the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."—"*He* shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied." In these as in the former instances, God's covenant stands fast with one, and many are blessed for his sake: their salvation is his reward.

DISCOURSE XII.

THE FLOOD.

Genesis vii.

We have seen the preparation of the ark, the warnings of God by it, and his long suffering for a hundred and twenty years. Now we see it finished: now the end of all flesh is come before him.

Ver. 1. Observe, 1. God gave special notice to Noah, saying, "Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous." He who in well-doing commits himself into the hands of a faithful Creator, needs not fear being overtaken by surprise. What have we to fear when he whom we serve hath the keys of hell and of death? This is not the only instance in which, when impending ills have been ready to burst upon the world, God has, in effect, said to his servants, "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself, as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast." 2. God gave him all his household with him. We are not informed whether any of Noah's family at present followed his example: it is certain that all did not: yet all entered with him into the ark for his sake. This indeed was but a specimen of the mercy which was to be exercised towards his distant posterity on behalf of him. as we have seen in the former chapter. But it is of importance to observe that, though temporal blessings may be given to the ungodly children of a godly parent, yet without walking in his steps they will not be partakers with him in those which are spiritual and eternal. 3. It is an affecting thought that there should be *no more* than Noah and his family to enter into the ark. Peter speaks of them as *few;* and few they were, considering the vast numbers that were left behind. Noah had long been a preacher of righteousness; and what! is there not one sinner brought to repentance by his preaching? It should seem not one; or, if there were any, they were taken away from the evil to come. Not one that we know of was found at the time who had received his warnings, and was desirous of casting in his lot with him. We are ready to think our ministry has but little success; but his, so far as appears, was without any; yet, like Enoch, he pleased God. 4. The righteousness of Noah is repeated as the reason of the difference put between him and the world. This does not imply that the favor shown to him is to be ascribed to his own merit; for, whatever he was, he was by grace; and all his righteousness was rewardable only out of respect to Him in whom he believed: but, being

accepted for his sake, his works also were accepted and honored. And, while the *mercy* of God was manifested towards him, the distinction between him and the world being made according to character would render his *justice* apparent. Thus at the last day, though the righteous will have nothing to boast of, yet, every man being judged according to his works, the world will be constrained to acknowledge the equity of the divine proceedings.

Ver. 2, 3. Of the animals which were to enter into the ark with Noah, those that were clean, that is, those which were fit for human food and for sacrifices to God, were to go in by sevens, and those which were unclean, only by two of a kind. It would seem as if this direction differed from that in chap. vi. 19, 20, which mentions only two of every sort: but the meaning there may be that whatever number entered in they should be in *pairs*, that is, male and female, to preserve them alive; whereas here the direction is more particular, appointing the number of pairs that should be admitted, according as they were clean or unclean. This order is expressive of the goodness of God in providing food for man, and of his regard for his own worship.

Ver. 4—9. Just one week was allowed for Noah to embark. What a week was this! What feelings must it excite! His neighbors had seen him busily employed for the last hundred and twenty years in rearing the massy fabric; and doubtless had had many a laugh at the old man's folly and credulity; and now, behold, he is going to remove all his family into it, with birds, and beasts, and creeping things, and provisions for their accommodation! "Well, let him go: a week longer, and we shall see what will become of his dreams!" Meanwhile they eat and drink, and buy and sell, and marry and are given in marriage. As for Noah, he must have felt much in contemplating the destruction of the whole of his species, to whom he had preached righteousness in vain. But it is not for him to linger; but to "do according to all that the Lord commanded him." He had borne his testimony: he could do no more. He, his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives, therefore, with all the inferior creatures, which probably were caused to assemble before him by the same power which brought them to Adam to be named, enter into the ark. The same thing which is said of him in ver. 7, is repeated in ver. 13. He doubtless would have to enter and re-enter many times in the course of the week but the last describes his final entrance, when he should return no more.

Ver. 10—16. From the account, taken together, it appears that, though God suffered long with the world during the ministry of Noah, yet the flood came upon them at last very suddenly. The words, *after* seven days, in ver. 10, seem to mean *on* the seventh day;* for that was the day when Noah made his final entrance into the ark; namely, the seventeenth day of the second month, answering to our October or November, in the sixth hundreth year of his life; and "on that same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven opened." What a scene of consternation and dismay must that day have exhibited, on the part of those who were left behind! The manner in which the rains set in, would leave little or no hope of their being soon over. It was not a common rain: it came in torrents, or, as we should say, in a manner as though heaven and earth were come together. The waters of the subterraneous cavities from beneath, and of the clouds from above, all met together at God's command, to execute his wrath on guilty men.† There is one sentence concerning Noah which is worthy of special notice: when he and all pertaining to him had entered into the ark, it is said, "And the Lord shut him in." The door of such a stupendous building may be supposed to have been too large for human hands to fasten, especially so few as they were, and all withinside it. It is possible, too, there might be, by this time, numbers crowding round it for admittance; for those who trifle with death at a distance are often the most terrified when it approaches. But lo, all is over! That act which shut Noah and his family in, shut them forever out! And let it be considered that something very nearly resembling this will ere long be acted over again. "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be at the coming of the Son of Man." Not only shall the world, as then, be full of dissipation, but the concluding scene is described in nearly the same words—"And they that were ready went in, and the door was shut."

* Such a mode of speaking is usual in the Scriptures. Compare ver. 6 with ver. 11, and chap. xl. 18, 20.

† The *great deep* seems to mean that vast confluence of waters said to have been gathered together on the third day of the creation into one place, and called seas.—chap. i. 9, 10. These waters not only extend over a great part of the surface of the earth, but probably flow, as through a number of arteries and veins, to its most interior recesses, and occupy its centre. This body of waters, which was ordained, as I may say, unto life, was turned, in just displeasure against man's sin, into an engine of destruction. Bursting forth in tremendous floods, multitudes were hereby swept away; while, from above, the clouds poured forth their torrents, as though heaven itself were a reservoir of waters, and God had opened its windows.

Ver. 17—24. We hear no more of the inhabitants of the world, except that "all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, *and every man:* all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died." We are informed, however, of the progress of the flood. For six weeks, within two days, it continued to rain incessantly; during which period it was of sufficient depth to bear up the ark from the earth which after this floated upon the surface of the waters, like a ship on the sea. For some time, however, there were mountains and high hills which were out of water. Hither, therefore, we may naturally suppose, the inhabitants of the earth would repair, as to their last refuge: but, by the end of the forty days, these also were covered; the waters rising above seven yards higher than the highest of them. Thus every creature was swept away and buried in one watery grave, Noah and his family only excepted.

The waters prevailed upon the earth a hundred and fifty days (that is, about five months) before they began to abate. This might seem to us unnecessary, seeing every living creature would be drowned within the first six weeks; but it would serve to exercise the faith and patience of Noah, and to impress his posterity with the greatness of the divine displeasure against man's sin. As the land of Israel should have its sabbaths during the captivity, so the whole earth, for a time, shall be relieved from its load, and fully purified as it were, from its uncleanness.

DISCOURSE XIII.

THE FLOOD (CONTINUED.)

Gen. viii.

THE close of the last chapter brought us to the crisis of the flood, or to the period in which it had arrived at its greatest height: hence it began to abate. Observe the form in which it is expressed: "God remembered Noah, and those that were with him in the ark." A common historian would only have narrated the event: but the sacred writers ascribe every thing to God, sometimes to the omission of second causes. The term is figurative; for, strictly speaking, God never forgot them: but it is one of those modes of speaking which convey a great fulness of meaning. It is expressive of tender mercy, of covenant mercy, and of mercy after a strong expression of displeasure. These are things which frequently occur in the divine proceedings. Hence, a wind passes over the earth, and the waters begin to assuage.

Ver. 2—4. The causes of the deluge being removed, the effects gradually subside; and the waters, having performed their work, return into their wonted channels. The ark, which had hitherto floated on the waters, now finds land, and rests upon the top of one of the Armenian mountains; and this just five months after the entrance into it. For a ship in the sea to have struck upon a rock or land would have been extremely dangerous; but at this stage of the flood we may suppose the heavens were clear and calm, and the waters still. Noah did not steer the ark; it was therefore God's doing, and was in mercy to him and his companions. Their voyage was now at an end. They put in as at the first possible port. The rest which they enjoy is a prelude to a more perfect one approaching. Thus God places believers upon high ground, on which they are already safe, and may anticipate a better country, even a heavenly one.

Ver. 5—13. The first objects that greet them, after having been nearly eight months aboard, are the tops of the mountains. They had felt one of them before; but now the waters are sufficiently abated to see several of them. If we had been on a long and dangerous voyage at sea, we should be better able to conceive of the joy which this sight must have occasioned than we possibly can be without it. Often has a ship's company been called on deck to see a distant object which promised to be land. Often too have Christians in their voyage been cheered by the signs of approaching blessedness, and the happy foretastes bestowed upon them. After the lapse of forty days more, the window of the ark was opened, and a raven sent forth for the purpose of experiment, that they might see whether it could subsist of itself or not; and the event proved that it could subsist, for it returned no more. This was encouraging. Seven days after this, Noah tries a more delicate bird, the dove, which could not live unless the ground was at least in some places dry: but she from necessity returned. A proof this that the waters as yet were on the face of the whole earth. Tarrying yet other seven days, Noah sends out a second time his faithful messenger, the dove, which again returned to him in the evening; but lo, a sign is in her mouth which gladdens all their hearts! It is "an olive-leaf plucked off!" An olive-leaf might have floated upon the surface of the waters; but it was observable of this that the dove had plucked it off the tree: a proof that the tops of the trees, in some places were out of water. Perhaps it is from this event

that the olive-branch has ever since been considered as the emblem of peace. After seven days more, Noah sends forth the dove again; which returning no more, he knew the earth must in some places be dry. The repeated mention of *seven days* seems to imply that from the beginning time had been divided into weeks; which can no otherwise be accounted for, that I know of, than by admitting that, from the beginning, those who feared God remembered the sabbath day to keep it holy. About a month after this the waters are dried up from off the earth, and the covering of the ark is removed. Now they have the pleasure to look around them, and to see the dry land in every direction; but still it is not habitable. And as Noah came into the ark by God's command, so he must wait his time ere he attempts to go out, which will be nearly two months longer.

Ver. 14—19. At length the set time to favor this little company is come. On the 27th day of the second month, that is, just a year and ten days after their entrance into the ark they are commanded to go forth of it, with all that pertained to them, and to begin, not the world, as we should say, again, but a new world. Obedient to the heavenly vision, they take leave of the friendly vessel which through many a storm had preserved them, and landed them in safety.

Ver. 20—22. The first object of attention with a worldly man might have been a day of rejoicing, or the beginning to build a house: but Noah begins by building *an altar to Jehovah*, on which he offered "burnt-offerings of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl." I think this is the first time we read of a *burnt-offering*. It was so called, as Moses says, "because of the burning upon the altar all night unto the morning." It was a substitutional sacrifice, for the purpose of atonement. The process is described in Lev. i. 2—9. The sinner confessed his sin upon its head; the animal was killed, or treated as if it were the transgressor, and as if the sin had been actually transferred to it: the blood of the creature being shed was sprinkled round about upon the altar; and to show the divine acceptance of it on behalf of the offerer, to make atonemeut for him, it was consumed by fire, either descending immediately from heaven, as was the case on some occasions, or kindled by the priest from the sacred fire kept for the purpose (Lev. ix. 24; Ps. xx. 3. mar.;) finally: The sacrifice being sprinkled with salt, and perhaps with odors, ascended up in a sweet savor, and God was propitious to the offerer.

The burnt-offerings of Noah, according to this, must have been designed for an atonement in behalf of the remnant that was left; and, as Hezekiah said after the carrying away of the ten tribes, "for the making of a covenant with the Lord." This his offering was graciously accepted: "The Lord smelled a sweet savor," and bestowed upon him, and those who were with him, a covenant promise, not to curse the ground any more for man's sake. The reason given for this is singular: "for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." If God had dealt with man according to law and justice, this should have been a reason for destroying, rather than sparing him; and was the reason why the flood was brought upon the earth. But here he is represented as dealing with him through a substitute (for the promise follows the acceptance of the burnt-offering;) and in this view the wickedness of man, however offensive, should not determine his conduct. He would, as it were, look off from him, and rest his future conduct towards him on another ground. He would, in short, knowing what he was, deal with him on a footing of mercy and forbearance.

Surely I need not say that this sacrifice of Noah was one of those which bore a peculiar aspect to the offering of the body of Jesus once for all. It is not improbable that the apostle has a direct allusion to it when he says, "Christ hath loved us, and given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet-smelling savor."

In reviewing the destruction of the world by a flood, and the preservation of Noah and his family, we are furnished with three important reflections:—

1. It is a solid proof of the truth of divine revelation. "We are acquainted," says a late perspicuous and forcible writer, "with no ancient people who were without traditions of this great event. From Josephus we learn that Berosus, a Chaldean historian whose works are now lost, related the same things as Moses of the deluge, and the preservation of Noah in an ark. Eusebius informs us that the history of the flood was contained in the works of Abydenus, an Assyrian writer. Lucian, the Greek writer, says that the present is not the original race of men; but is descended from Deucalion, who was preserved in an ark from the universal deluge which destroyed men for their wickedness. Varro, the Roman writer, divided time into three periods, the first from the origin of men to the deluge. The Hindoo puranas contain the history of the deluge, and of Noah under the name of Satyavrata. They relate that Satyavrata was miraculously preserved in an ark from a deluge which destroyed all mankind."* The same

* Letters on the Evidences of the Christian Religion; by an Enquirer. First printed in the Ori-

writer adds, "That the whole of our globe has been submerged by the ocean is proved, not by tradition only, but by its mineralogical and fossil history. On the summits of high mountains, and in the centres of continents, vast beds of shells and other marine productions are to be found. Petrified fishes and sea weed exist in the heart of quarries. The vegetable and animal production of the torrid zone have been dug up in the coldest regions, as Siberia; and, *vice versa*, the productions of the polar regions have been found in warm climates. These facts are unanswerable proofs of a deluge."

2. It is intimated by the apostle Peter that the salvation of Noah and his family in the ark was a figure of our salvation by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It was for a time buried, as it were, in the floods of divine wrath from above and from beneath. It rose, however, and weathered the storm, safely landing those on dry ground who had been committed to its care. I need not make the application. A "like figure" of the same thing is Christian baptism, in which believers are said to be baptized into the death of Christ: "Buried with him into death, that like as he was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, so they also should walk in newness of life."

3. We are directed to consider the destruction of the world by water as a presage and premonition of its being destroyed in the end by fire. "The heavens and the earth, which now are, are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men."

DISCOURSE XIV.

GOD'S COVENANT WITH NOAH.

Gen. ix.

VER. 1, 2. We have now the beginning of a new world, and various directions given to those who are to people it. In several respects it resembles its first beginning; particularly in the command to be fruitful and multiply, and in the subjection of the creatures to man. But there is one great difference: all must now rest upon *a gracious covenant*. Man by sin had forfeited, not his existence indeed (for that was given him to hold on no conditional tenure,) but the blessing of God, and his dominion over his creatures. Nevertheless, he shall be reinstated in it. God will, as it were, make a covenant for him with the beasts of the field, and they shall be at peace with him, or at least shall be awed by his authority. All this is out of respect to the mediation of Christ, and for the accomplishing of the designs of mercy through him.

Ver. 3, 4. Here is also a special grant, which does not appear to have been given before: not only the herbs of the field, but the animals are given to man for food. It is however accompanied with a special exception with regard to *blood*, which is the life. This, being forbidden to Noah, appears also to have been forbidden to all mankind: nor ought this prohibition to be treated as belonging to the ceremonies of the Jewish dispensation. It was not only enjoined before that dispensation existed, but was enforced upon the Gentile Christians by the decrees of the apostles, Acts xv. 20. To allege, as some do, our Lord's words, "not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man," would equally justify the practice of cannibals in eating human flesh. The *reason* of this prohibition might be in part the prevention of *cruelty*; for the eating of blood implies and cherishes a ferocious disposition. None but the most ferocious of animals will eat it in one another; and one would think none but the most ferocious of mankind could endure it. But there may be a higher reason. Blood is *the life*, and God seems to claim it as sacred to himself. Hence, in all the sacrifices, the blood was poured out before the Lord: and, in the sacrifice, of Christ, he shed his blood, or poured out his soul unto death.

Ver. 5, 6. As God was tender of animal blood, in not suffering man to eat it, so, on the other hand, he would be especially tender of human blood. If any animal slew a man, let him be slain on that account: or, if any man slew himself, God would require it: or, if any man slew another man, he should be put to death by man. This also appears to be a new law, as we read of no executions for murder among the antediluvians. The reason for this law is not taken from the well-being of man, but man's being made in the *image* of God. The image of God is of two kinds, natural and moral. The latter was lost by sin; but the former continues with man in every state, and renders it peculiarly criminal to abuse him. To deface the king's image is a sort of treason among men, implying a hatred against him, and that, if he himself were within reach, he would be served in the same manner: how much more treasonable must it be to destroy, curse, oppress, or

ental Star, at Calcutta; reprinted at Serampore in 1802; and since reprinted in England, with additions and corrections by the Author.

in any way abuse the image of the King of kings!—James iii. 9.*

Ver. 7. The command to multiply is repeated, and contains permission, not of promiscuous intercourse, like the brutes, but of honorable marriage. The same law which forbade the eating of blood, under the gospel, forbad *fornication*, which was common among the heathen; and, alas, too common among those who call themselves Christians!

Ver. 8—17. Having given the foregoing precepts, God graciously proceeds to enter into a solemn *covenant* with Noah and his posterity, and every living creature that was with them, no more to destroy them by water, of which "the bow in the cloud" was to be the token. This covenant is an amplification of what was said at the altar, where the lord smelled a sweet savor; and indeed the first seventeen verses o this chapter are a continuation of that subject.

We see here, 1. The mercy and goodness of God in proceeding with us in a way of covenant. He might have exempted the world from this calamity, and yet not have told them he would do so. The remembrance of the flood might have been a sword hanging over their heads *in terrorem*. But he will set their minds at rest on this score, and therefore promises, and that with an oath, that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth.—Isa. liv. 9. Thus also he deals with us in his Son. Being willing that the heirs of promise should have strong consolation, he confirms his word by an oath.—Heb. vi. 17, 18. 2. The importance of living under the light of revelation. Noah's posterity by degrees sunk into idolatry, and became "strangers to the covenants of promise." Such were our fathers for many ages, and such are great numbers to this day. So far as respects them, God might as well have made no promise: to them all is lost. 3. The importance of being believers. Without this it will be worse for us than if we had never been favored with a revelation. Finally: We see here the kind of life which it was God's design to encourage—*a life of faith*. The just shall live by faith." If he had made no revelation of himself, no covenants, and no promises, there would be no ground for faith; and we must have gone through life feeling after him, without being able to find him: but, having made known his mind, there is light in all our dwellings, and a sure ground for believing, not only in our exemption from another flood, but in things of far greater importance.

With respect to the sign, or token, of this covenant, *the bow in the cloud*, as it seems to be the effect of causes which existed from the beginning, it is probable that that also existed; but it was not till now a *token* of God's covenant with the world. Such a token was extremely suitable, on account of its conspicuousness, and its appearance *in the cloud*, or at a time when the fears of man would be apt to rise, lest they should be overwhelmed with another flood. This being a sign of peace, the King of Zion is described as having "a rainbow about his throne."

Ver. 18, 19. God having thus saved, counselled, and covenanted with this little company, Moses proceeds to narrate their history. In general, we are informed that the fathers of the new world were Noah's three sons, Shem, and Ham, and Japheth; from whom the earth was peopled. And, having mentioned Ham, he says, "He was the father of Canaan." This remark of Moses was doubtless made with a special design; for living, as he did, when the Israelites, who descended from Shem, were about to take possessoin of the land of Canaan, it was of peculiar importance that they should be informed that the people whose country the Lord their God had given them to possess were under a curse from the days of their first father. The particulars of this affair will appear in the sequel.

Ver. 20—23. Noah, as soon as he could get settled, betook himself to the employment of husbandry; and the first thing he did in this way was to plant a vineyard. So far all was right: man, as we have seen, was formed originally for an active and not an idle life. Adam was ordered to keep the garden, and to dress it; and, when fallen, to till the ground whence he was taken, which now required much labor. Perhaps there is no employment more free from

* In defending the principles of civil and religious liberty against persecution for conscience' sake, it has often been alleged that civil government has no right to restrain or punish men, but on account of their injuring their fellow-men. That whatever is punishable by man *is* injurious to man is true; because all sin in some way or other is so: but to make this *the sole ground*, or *reason*, of punishment, is selfish and atheistical. It is making ourselves the chief end; whereas this is what God claims to himself at the hand of every man and body of men. The cognizance of the civil magistrate ought indeed to be confined to what is civil and moral; but, in punishing men for immorality, he ought not merely to regard his own safety, nor even that of the community, but the honor of God: and if he be a good man he will do so. If he regard merely his own safety, punishing crimes only in so far as they endanger it, the people will soon perceive that he is a selfish tyrant, and cares not for the general good: and if he regard only the public safety, punishing crimes merly on account of their being injurious to men, it is still a spirit of selfishness, only a little more extended; and God will disapprove of this, as the people do of the other.

snares. But in the most lawful occupations and enjoyments we must not reckon ourselves out of danger. It was very lawful for Noah to partake of the fruits of his labor; but Noah sinned in drinking to excess. He might not be aware of the strength of the wine, or his age might render him sooner influenced by it: at any rate, we have reason to conclude, from his general character, that it was a fault in which he was "overtaken." But let us not think lightly of the sin of drunkenness. "Who hath woe? who hath redness of eyes? They that *tarry long* at the wine." Times of festivity require a double guard. Neither age nor character is any security in the hour of temptation. Who would have thought that a man who had walked with God perhaps more than five hundred years, and who had withstood the temptations of a world, should fall alone? This was like a ship which had gone round the world being overset in sailing into port. What need for watchfulness and prayer! One heedless hour may stain the fairest life, and undo much of the good which we have been doing through a course of years! Drunkenness is a sin which involves in it the breach of the whole law, which requires love to God, our neighbor, and ourselves. The first as abusing his mercies; the second as depriving those who are in want of them of necessary support, as well as setting an ill example; and the last as depriving ourselves of reason, self-government and common decency. It also commonly leads on to other evils. It has been said, and justly, that the name of this sin is "Gad—*a troop cometh!*"

But, sinful as it was for Noah thus to expose himself, it was still more so for *Ham*, on perceiving his situation, to go out and report it with malignant pleasure to his brethren. None but a fool will make a mock of sin in any one: but for children to expose and sneer at the sin of their parents is wickedness of the most aggravated kind. It indicates a heart thoroughly depraved. The conduct of Shem and Japheth on this unhappy occasion was as commendable as the other was censurable, and as worthy of our imitation as that is of our abhorrence.

Ver. 24. When Noah came to himself, he knew what had been done by his younger son. Nothing is said of his grief for his own sin. I hope his anger did not turn merely against that of his son. Nor are we to consider what follows as an ebullition of personal resentment, but as a prophecy, which was meant to apply and has been ever since applying to his posterity, and that which it was not possible for human resentment to dictate. But as this prophecy is very comprehensive, and will lead us to take notice of some of the great principles of revelation, I shall reserve it for a future discourse.

DISCOURSE XV.

NOAH'S PROPHECY.

Gen. ix. 25—27.

It was common among the patriarchs, when about to die to pronounce a prophetic sentence on their children, which frequently bore a relation to what had been their conduct, and extended to their remote posterity. This prophecy, however, though not immediately after the flood, was probably many years before the death of Noah. I shall first attempt to ascertain its meaning, and its agreement with the great outlines of historic fact; and then endeavor to justify the ways of providence in such dispensations.

The prophecy is introduced with a curse upon the posterity of one of Noah's sons, and concludes with a blessing upon the other two; each corresponding with his conduct on the late unhappy occasion.

"Cursed be Canaan: a servant of servants" (that is, the meanest of servants) "shall he be unto his brethren." But why is the name of Ham omitted, and the curse confined to his son Canaan? Some suppose that Canaan must have been in some way partaker in the crime; but this is uncertain. It is thought by several able critics that instead of Canaan we should read, as it is in ver. 22, "Ham the father of Canaan;"* and this seems very plausible, as otherwise there is nothing said of Ham, except in the person of his son; and, what is still more, the curse of servitude actually came, though at a remote period, upon other branches of the posterity of Ham as well as Canaan. It is manifest, however, that it was directed against him *principally* in the line of Canaan; and that it was related by Moses for the encouragement of Israel in going up against his descendants, the Canaanites. Canaan is under a curse of servitude to both Shem and Japheth: the former was fulfilled in the conquest of the seven nations by Israel, and the latter in the subjugation of the Tyrians and Carthaginians (who were the remainder of the old Canaanites,) by the Greeks and Romans.

* Ainsworth says, "By Canaan may be understood or implied Canaan's father, as the Greek translation hath Ham, and as elsewhere in Scripture Goliath is named for Goliath's father. 2 Sam. xxi. 19, compared with 1 Chron. xx. 5." See also Bishop Newton on the Prophecies. Dissert. I.

So far as the curse had reference to the other descendants of Ham, it was a long time, as I have said, ere it came upon them. In the early ages of the world they flourished. They were the first who set up for empire; and so far from being subject to the descendants of Shem or Japheth, the latter were often invaded and driven into corners by them. It was Nimrod, a descendant of Ham, who founded the imperial city of Babylon; and Mizraim, another of his descendants, who first established the kingdom of Egypt. These it is well known, were for many ages two of the greatest empires in the world. About the time of the captivity, however, God began to cut short their power. Both Egypt and Babylon within a century sunk into a state of subjection, first to the Persians, who descended from Shem, and afterwards to the Greeks and Romans, who were the children of Japheth. Nor have they even been able to recover themselves; for to the dominion of the Romans succeeded that of the Saracens, and to theirs that of the Turks, under which they with a great part of Africa, which is peopled by the children of Ham, have lived, and still live, in the most degraded state of subjection. To all this may be added that the inhabitants of Africa seem to be marked out as objects of slavery by the European nations. Though these things are far from excusing the conduct of their opressors, yet they establish the fact, and prove the fulfilment of prophecy.

"Blessed be Jehovah, God of Shem!" The form of this blessing is worthy of notice. It may not seem to be pronounced on him, but on his God. But such a mode of speaking implies his blessedness no less than if it had been expressly spoken of him; for it is a principle well known in religion that "blessed is that people whose God is Jehovah." They are blessed in his blessedness. It is in this form that Moses describes the blessedness of Israel: "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky." Shem was the ancestor of Abram, and so of Israel, who, while the descendants both of Ham and Japheth were lost in idolatry, knew and worshipped Jehovah the only true God; and "of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God, blessed forever." It has been remarked, too, that Shem is the first person who had the honor of having the Lord styled *his* God; and that this expression denotes his being *in covenant* with him, as when he is called the God of Abram, of Isaac, and of Jacob. Noah, foreseeing, by a spirit of prophecy, that God would enter into a special covenant with the posterity of Shem, taking them to be his peculiar people, and binding himself to be their God, was affected at the consideration of so great a privilege, and breaks out into an ascription of praise to God on this account.

"God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents, of Shem." If this part of the prophecy have respect to temporal dominion, it seems to refer to the posterity of Japheth being formerly *straitened*, but in the latter ages of the world enabled to extend their conquests; and this exactly corresponds with history. For more than two thousand years the empire of the civilized world has in a manner been in the hands of the posterity of Japheth. First the Greeks, after them the Romans, and, since the declension of their empire, the different powers of Europe have entered into the richest possessions of Asia, inhabited by the children of Shem. Add to this, their borders have lately been enlarged beyond the Atlantic and bid fair to extend over the continent of America.

But, as Japheth united with Shem in the act of filial respect to his father, it would seem as if the dwelling of the one in the tents of the other must be friendly, and not hostile; but as the blessing of Shem had peculiar reference to *the Church of God* among his descendants, it may be considered as prophetic of the accession of the Gentiles to it under the gospel. It is a fact that Christianity has principally prevailed among the posterity of Japheth. The Lord God of Shem is there known and honored. The lively oracles given to the fathers of the one are possessed and prized by the other: they labored, and we have entered into their labors. This interpretation is favored by the marginal reading, which the very learned Ainsworth says the original word properly signifies: "God shall *persuade* Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem."

Let us proceed in the next place to offer a remark or two on the *justice* of the divine proceeding in denouncing a curse upon children, even to remote periods, for the iniquity of their parents. It is worthy of notice that the God of Israel thought it no dishonor to his character to declare that he would "visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children in those that hated him," any more than that he would "show mercy to those that loved him," which he did in an eminent degree to the posterity of Abram. And should any object to this, and to the Bible on this account, we might appeal to universal fact. None can deny that children are the better or the worse for the conduct of their parents. If any man insist that neither good nor evil shall befal him, but what is the immediate consequence of his own conduct, he must go out of the

world; for no such state of existence is known in it.

There is, however, an important difference between *the sin of a parent being the* OCCASION *of the prediction of a curse upon his posterity (who were considered by Him who knew the end from the beginning as walking in his steps,) and its being the formal* CAUSE *of their punishment.* The sin of Ham was the *occasion* of the prediction against the Canaanites, and the *antecedent* to the evil predicted; but it was not the *cause* of it. Its formal procuring cause may be seen in the eighteenth chapter of Leviticus. To Ham, and perhaps to Canaan, the prediction of the servitude of their descendants was a punishment: but the fulfilment of that prediction on the parties themselves was no farther such than as it was connected with *their own* sin.

There is also an important difference between *the provential dispensations of God towards families and nations in the present world, and the administration of distributive justice towards individuals with respect to the world to come.* In the last judgment "every one shall give account of himself to God and be judged according to the deeds done in the body:" but while we are in this world we stand in various relations, in which it is impossible that we should be dealt with merely as individuals. God deals with families and nations *as such;* and in the course of his providence visits them with good and evil, not according to the conduct of individuals, but, as far as conduct is concerned, that of the general body. To insist that we should in all cases be treated as individuals, is to renounce the social character.

We are informed, at the close of the chapter, that Noah lived after the flood three hundred years, and died at the age of nine hundred and fifty. How long this was after the foregoing prophecy we are not informed; but he lived to see, in the descendants of Shem, Eber and Nahor and Terah the father of Abram.

DISCOURSE XVI.

THE GENERATIONS OF NOAH.

Gen. x.

WITHOUT this genealogy we should not have been able to ascertain the fulfilment of Noah's prophecy: but after what has been said on that subject, I need not be particular here. The chapter contains the origin of the various nations of antiquity; and, the more it is examined and compared with universal history, the more credible it will appear. All the researches of the Asiatic Society into the ancient Hindoo records go to confirm it. But it does not comport with the object of these discourses to enter minutely into such subjects; I shall therefore pass over it with only a few remarks.

1. Concerning the posterity of *Japheth*, ver. 2—5. His family was the largest, and almost every one of his sons became the father of a nation. In them we trace, among others, the names of *Madia*, the father of the Medes—of *Javan*, and his two sons, *Kittim* and *Dodanim*, the fathers of the Ionians, or Greeks, and of the Romans. It was from Japheth that all the nations of Europe appear to have been peopled; who seem, at this early period, to have obtained the name of Gentiles; namely, *peoples*, or *nations*, ver. 5. This name was given in apostolic times to all who were not Jews; but in earlier ages it seems to have been chiefly if not entirely, applied to the Europeans. Such at least is the meaning of "the isles of the Gentiles," in which, by a synecdoche, those places which were the nearest to the situation of the sacred writer are put for all the countries beyond them. And the Scripture foreseeing that Europe would, from the first, embrace the gospel, and for many ages be the principal seat of its operation, the Messiah himself is introduced by Isaiah as addressing himself to its inhabitants:—"Listen, *oh isles*, unto me; and hearken ye people from afar! Jehovah hath called me from the womb, and hath said unto me, It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob—I will also give thee for a light to the *Gentiles*, that thou shouldst be my salvation to the end of the earth." Here we see not only the first peopling of our native country, but the kind remembrance of us in a way of mercy, and this though far removed from the means of salvation. What a call is this to us who occupy what is denominated "the end of the earth" to be thankful for the gospel, and to listen to the sweet accents of our Saviour's voice!

2. Concerning the posterity of *Ham*, ver. 6—20. In them we trace, among others, the names of *Cush*, the father of the Ethiopians—of *Mizraim*, the father of the Egyptians—and of *Canaan*, the father of the Canaanites.

Particular notice is taken of *Nimrod*, the son of Cush, as the first who set up for empire. He might, for any thing I know, be fond of hunting beasts; but the connexion of his character with a *kingdom* induces me to think that *men* were the principal objects of his pursuit, and that it is in reference to this that he is called "a mighty hunter," a very proper name for what modern historians would have called a hero. Thus we see, from the beginning, that things which

are highly esteemed among men are held in abomination with God. This perfectly accords with the language of the prophets, in which the great conquerors of the earth are described as so many *wild beasts* pushing at one another, whose object is to seize and tear the prey.—Nimrod was a mighty hunter "before the Lord." This may denote his daring spirit, doing what he did in the face of heaven, or in defiance of the divine authority. Thus the inhabitants of Sodom are said to be wicked and sinners "before the Lord." Nimrod's fame was so great that his name became proverbial. In after times, any one who was a daring plunderer in defiance of heaven was likened unto him, just as the wicked kings of Israel were likened to "Jeroboam, the son of Nebat who made Israel to sin." In short, he became the type, pattern, or father of usurpers and martial plunderers. Till his time, government had been patriarchal: but his ambition led him to found a royal city, even that which was afterwards called Babel, or Babylon; and to add to it (for the ambition of conquerors have no bounds) "Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar." Nor was this all. Either he drove Ashur the son of Shem, from the land of Shinar (who taking up his residence in Assyria, built Nineveh, and other places,) or else, as Ainsworth and the margin of our own bibles render it, "He (Nimrod) went forth out of that land to Ashur, or Assyria, and builded Nineveh." The latter is very probably the true meaning, as the sacred writer is not here describing what was done by the posterity of Shem, which he introduces afterwards, but by that of Ham; and it perfectly accords with Nimrod's character, to go hunting from land to land, for the purpose of increasing his dominion.

From *Mizraim*, the father of the Egyptians, descended also the Philistines. Their situation was near to that of the Canaanites; but, not being of them, their country was not given to Israel. This accounts for their not attempting to take it, though in after times there were frequent wars between them.

Finally: Moses was very particular with regard to the Canaanites, describing not only what nations they were, but what were their boundaries, that Israel might know and be content with what the Lord their God had given them. Under this head, we see much of what pertains to this world, but that is not all. We may learn from it that men may be under the divine curse, and yet be very successful for a time in schemes of aggrandizement. But, if this be their all, woe unto them! There are instances, however, of individuals, even from among Ham's posterity, who obtained mercy. Of them were Rahab the harlot, Uriah the Hittite, Obededom, and Ittai, and his brethren the Gittites, and the Syrophenician woman who applied to Christ. The door of mercy is open to faith, without distinction of nations; nor was there ever a time in which the God of Israel refused even a Canaanite who repented and embraced his word.

3. Concerning the posterity of *Shem*, ver. 21—32. The account of this patriarch is introduced in rather a singular manner: it is mentioned as an appendage to his name, a kind of title of honor that was to go along with it, that he was "father of all the children of Eber, and brother of Japheth the elder." Shem had other sons as well as these, and another brother as well as Japheth; but no such special mention is made of them. When Moses would describe *the line of the curse*, he calls Ham "the father of Canaan;" and, when *the line of promise*, he calls Shem "the father of all Eber." And, as Japheth had been the brother of Shem in an act of filial duty, his posterity shall be grafted in among them and become fellow-heirs of the same promise; yet, as in diverse other instances, the younger goes before the elder.

Among Shem's other descendants we find the names of *Elam* and *Ashur*, fathers of the Persians and Assyrians, two great Asiatic nations. But these, not being of the church of God, are but little noticed in the sacred history, except as they come in contact with it.

Eber is said to have had two sons, one of whom is called Peleg, *division;* because in his days the earth was *divided*. This event took place subsequently to the confusion of tongues, which is yet to be related. It seems to refer to an allotment of different families, as Canaan was divided among the Israelites by Joshua. This division of the earth is elsewhere ascribed to the Most High.—Deut. xxxii. 8. Probably it was by lot, which was of his disposing; or, if by the fathers of the different families, all was subject to the direction of His providence who fixes and bounds our habitation. It is intimated in the same passage that, at the time of this division, God marked out the holy land as Israel's lot, so that the Canaanites were to posses it only during his minority, and that by sufferance. It was rather lent than given to them from the first.

DISCOURSE XVII.

THE CONFUSION OF TONGUES.

Gen. xi. 1—9.

It has been before noticed that this story is thrown farther on, on account of finishing the former. The event took place before the division of the earth in the time of Peleg; for every family is there repeatedly said to be divided *after their tongues;* which implies that at that time they spake various languages, and that this was one of the rules by which they were to be distinguished as nations.

Prior to the flood, and down to this period, "the whole earth was of one language." We are not told what this was. Whether it was the same as continued in the family of Eber, or whether from this time it was lost is a matter of small account to us. But it seemed good in the sight of God hence to divide mankind into different nations, and to this end to give them each a different tongue. The occasion of this great event will appear from the following story.

The posterity of Noah, beginning to increase, found it necessary to extend their habitations. A company of them, journeying from the east, pitched upon a certain plain in the land of Shinar, by the river Euphrates. Judging it to be an eligible spot, they consulted, and determined here to build a city. There was no stone, it seems, near at hand; but there was a kind of earth very suitable for bricks, and a bituminous substance which is said to ooze from certain springs in that plain, like tar or pitch, and this they used for cement. Of these materials were afterwards built the famous walls of Babylon.

Having found a good material, they proposed to build "a city and a tower" of great eminence, by which they should obtain *a name,* and avoid the evil of which they thought themselves in danger, of being scattered upon the face of the whole earth. But here they were interrupted by a divine interposition: the Lord came down and confounded their language, so that they could not understand one another's speech.

To perceive the *reason* of this extraordinary proceeding, it is necessary to inquire into the *object,* or *design,* of the builders. If this can be ascertained, the whole passage may be easily understood. It could not be, as some have supposed, to provide against a future flood; for this would have needed no divine interposition to prevent its having effect. God knew his own intention never to drown the world any more: and if it had been otherwise, or if they, from a disbelief of his promise, had been disposed to provide against it, they would not have been so foolish as to build for this purpose a tower upon a *plain,* which, when raised to the greatest possible height, would be far below the tops of the mountains. It could not have been said of such a scheme, "This they have begun to do; and now nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined to do:" for it would have defeated itself.

Neither does it appear to have been designed, as others have supposed, for an *idol's temple.* At least, there is nothing in the story which leads to such a conclusion. It was not for the name of a god, but for *their own name,* that they proposed to build; and that not the *tower* only, but a *city and a tower.* Nor was the confounding of their language any way adapted, that I can perceive, to defeat such a design as this. Idolatry prevailed in the world, for aught that appears, as much under a variety of languages as it would under one.

Some have imagined that it was intended merely as a monument of architectural ambition, like the pyramids of Egypt. This supposition might in a measure agree with the idea of doing it for *a name;* but it is far from harmonizing with other parts of the history. It contains no such deeplaid scheme as is intimated in the 6th verse, and given as the reason of the divine interference: nor is it supposable that God should remain throughout every age of the world, or which at least has remained to this day, merely for the purpose of counteracting a momentary freak of human vanity.

There are four characters by which this design, whatever it was, is described.—1. It was founded in *ambition;* for they said, "Let us make *a name.*"—2. It required *union;* for which purpose they proposed to build "*a city,*" that they might live together, and concentrate their strength and counsels. This is noticed by the Lord himself: "Behold, the people," saith he, "*are one,* and have all one language:" and his confounding their language was for the express purpose of destroying this oneness, by "scattering them abroad upon the face of the earth."—3. It required that they should be furnished with the means of *defence;* for which they proposed to add a "tower" to the city, to which the citizens might repair in times of danger; and of such a height as to bid defiance to any who should attempt to annoy them with arrows, or other missive weapons.—4. The scheme was *wisely laid;* so much so, that, if God had not interposed to frustrate it, it would have succeeded; "And this they have begun to do; and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do."

The only object which appears to accord with all these general characters, and with

the whole account taken together, is that of a UNIVERSAL MONARCHY, *by which all the families of the earth, in all future ages, might be held in subjection.* A very little reflection will convince us that such a scheme must of necessity be founded in *ambition;* that it required *union*, and of course a *city*, to carry it into execution; that a *tower*, or citadel, was also necessary to repel those who might be disposed to dispute their claims; and that, if these measures were once carried into effect, there was nothing in the nature of things to *prevent the accomplishment of their design.*

If there were no other reasons in favor of the supposition in question, its agreement with all these circumstances of the history might be sufficient to establish it: but to this other things may be added, by way of corroboration.

The *time* when the confusion of tongues took place renders it highly probable that the scheme which it was intended to subvert was of Nimrod's forming, or that he had a principal concern in it. It must have been a little before *the division of the earth* among the sons of Shem, Ham, and Japheth, "after their *tongues*, in their countries, and in their nations;" being that which rendered such division necessary. Now this was about the time of the birth of Peleg, who was named from that event; and this, by reckoning the genealogies mentioned in chap. xi. 10—16, will appear to have been about a hundred years after the flood. At this time, Nimrod, who was the grandson of Ham, must have been alive and in his prime. And as he was the first person who aspired to dominion over his brethren, and as it is expressly said of him that "the beginning of his kingdom was Babel," nothing is more natural than to suppose that he was the leader in this famous enterprise, and that the whole was a scheme of his, by which to make himself master of the world.

It was also natural for an ambitious people, headed by an ambitious leader, to set up for *universal monarchy.* Such has been the object of almost all the great nations and conquerors of the earth in later periods. Babylon, though checked for the present by this divine interference, yet afterwards resumed the pursuit of her favorite object; and in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, seemed almost to have gained it. The style used by that monarch in his proclamations comported with the spirit of this idea: "To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and tongues!" Now if such has been the ambition of all Nimrod's successors, in every age, it is nothing surprising that it should have struck the mind of Nimrod himself, and his adherents. They would also have a sort of claim to which their successors could not pretend; namely, that of being the *first* or *parent* kingdom; and the weight which men are apt to attach to this claim may be seen by the later pretensions of Papal Rome (another Babylon,) which, under the character of a *mother church*, headed by a *pope*, or pretended holy *father*, has subjected all Christendom to her dominion.

To this may be added, that the means used to counteract these builders were exactly suited to defeat the above design; namely, that of *dividing* and *scattering* them, by confounding their language, and it is worthy of notice that, though several empires have extended their territories over people of different languages, yet language has been a very common boundary of nations ever since. There is scarcely a great nation in the world but what has its own language. The dividing of languages was therefore, in effect, the dividing of nations; and so a bar to the whole world being ruled by one government. Thus a perpetual miracle was wrought, to be an antidote to a perpetual disease.

But why, it may be asked, should it be the will of God to prevent a universal monarchy; and to divide the inhabitants of the world into a number of independent nations? This question opens a wide field for investigation. Suffice it to say, at present, such a state of things contains much mercy, both to the world and to the church.

With respect to the *world*, if the whole earth had continued under one government, that government would of course, considering what human nature is, have been exceedingly despotic and oppressive. We know that in every state of society where power, or wealth, or commerce, is monopolized by an individual, or confined to a few whose interests may unite them to one another, there is the greatest possible scope for injustice and oppression; and where there is the greatest scope for these evils, human nature being what it is, there they will most abound. Different nations and interests in the world serve as a balance one to the other. They are that to the world which a number of rival merchants, or smaller tradesmen, are to society; serving as a check upon each others rapacity. Union, when cemented by *good will to men*, is exceedingly desirable; but, when self-interest and ambition are at the bottom, it is exceedingly dangerous. Union, in such cases, is nothing better than a combination against the general good.

It might be thought that, if the whole world were under one government, a great number of *wars* might be prevented, which, as things now are would be certain to take place. And it is true that one stable government, *to a certain extent*, is on this account preferable to a great number of

smaller ones, which are always at variance. But this principle, if carried beyond certain limits, becomes inimical to human happiness. So far as different nations can really become one, and drop all local distinctions and interests, it is well: but if the good of the country governed be lost sight of, and every thing be done to aggrandize the city or country governing, it is otherwise. And where power is thus exercised, which it certainly would be in case of universal monarchy, it would produce as many wars as now exist, with only this difference, that instead of their being carried on between independent nations, they would consist of the risings of different parts of the empire against the government, in a way of rebellion: and by how much wars of this kind are accompanied with less mutual respect, less quarter given and taken, and consequently more cruelty than the other, by so much would the state of the world have been more miserable than it is at present.

The division of the world into independent nations has also been a great check on *persecution*, and so has operated in a way of mercy towards the *church*. If the whole world had been one despotic government, Israel, the people of God, must in all ages have been in the condition to which they were reduced from the times of the captivity as a punishment for their sins, a mere province of another power, which must have crushed them and hindered them, as was the case from the times of Cyrus to those of Darius. And, since the coming of Christ, the only way in which he permits his followers to avoid the malice of the world, which rages against them for his sake, is this: "If they persecute you in one city, flee to another." Of this liberty millions have availed themselves, from the earliest to the latest periods of the Christian church: but if the whole world had been under one government, and that government inimical to the gospel, there had been no place of refuge left upon earth for the faithful.

The necessary watch also that governments which have been the most disposed to persecute have been obliged to keep on each other has filled their hands, so as to leave them but little time to think of religious people. Saul, when pursuing David, was withdrawn from his purpose by intelligence being brought him that the *Philistines had invaded the land;* and thus, in innumerable instances, the quarrels of bad men have been advantageous to the righteous.

The division of power serves likewise to check the spirit of persecution, not only as finding employment for persecutors to watch their rivals, but as causing them to be watched and their conduct exposed. While the power of papal Rome extended over Christendom, persecution raged abundantly more than it has done since the Reformation, even in popish countries. Since that period, the popish powers, both ecclesiastical and civil, have felt themselves narrowly watched by Protestants, and have been almost ashamed out of their former cruelties. What has been done of late years has been principally confined to the secret recesses of the Inquisition. It is by communities as it is by individuals: they are restrained from innumerable excesses by the consideration of being under the eye of each other. Thus it is that liberty of conscience, being granted in one or two nations and becoming honorable, has insensibly made its way into the councils of many others.

From the whole we may infer two things:—1. The harmony of divine revelation with all that we know of fact. If any object to the probability of the foregoing account, and imagine that the various languages spoken in the world must have been of human contrivance, let them point us to a page in any history, ancient or modern, which gives an account of the first making of a language, dead or living. If all that man can be proved to have done towards the formation of any language be confined to changing, combining, improving, and reducing it to grammatical form, there is the greatest probability, independently of the authority of revelation, that languages themselves were originally the work of God, as was that of the first man and woman.—2. The desirableness of the universal spread of Christ's kingdom. We may see, in the *reasons* which render a universal government among men incompatible with the liberty and safety of the world, abundant cause to pray for this, and for the *union* of all his subjects under him. Here there is no danger of tyranny or oppression, nor any need of those low motives of rivalship to induce him to seek the well-being of his subjects. A union with Christ and one another embraces the best interests of mankind.

DISCOURSE XVIII.

THE GENERATIONS OF SHEM, AND THE CALL OF ABRAM.

Gen. xi. 10—32; xii. 1—4.

The sacred historian, having given an account of the re-peopling of the earth, here he takes leave of the "children of men," and confines himself to the history of the "sons of God." We shall find him all along adhreing to this principle. When

any of the posterity of the righteous turn their backs on God, he presently takes leave of them, and follows the true church and true religion wherever they go.

Ver. 10—26. The principal use of the genealogy of Shem to Terah, the father of Abram, may be to prove the fulfilment of all promises in the Messiah. To this purpose it is applied in the New-Testament.

Ver. 27—29. Terah, after he was seventy years of age, had three sons, Abram, Nahor, and Haran. But the order in which they here stand does not appear to be that of seniority, any more than that of Shem, and Ham, and Japheth; for, if Abram had been born when Terah was *seventy* years old, he must have been *a hundred and thirty-five* at the time of his father's death; whereas he is said to have been but *seventy-five* when, after that event, he set out for Canaan. Haran, therefore, appears to have been the eldest of the three sons. He died in Ur of the Chaldees; but left behind him a son and two daughters, Lot, and Milcah, and Iscah. The two surviving sons, Abram, and Nahor, took them wives: the name of Abram's wife was Sarai, of whose descent we are not here told: but, by what he said of her in chap. xx. 12, it would seem that she was his half-sister, or his father's daughter by another wife. In those early ages nearer degrees of consanguinity were admitted than were afterwards allowed by the divine law. Nahor married his brother Haran's eldest daughter, Milcah.

Ver. 31. It is said of Terah that he took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his grandson, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and that they went from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan. But here is something supposed which the historian reserves till he comes to the story of Abram, who, next to God, was the first mover in the undertaking, and the principal character in the story. In chap. xii. 1, we are told that "the Lord *had* said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee." Taking the whole together, it appears that God revealed himself to Abram, and called him to depart from that idolatrous and wicked country, whether any of his relations would go with him or not; that Abram told it to his father Terah, and to all the family, and invited them to accompany him; that Terah consented, as did also his grandson Lot; that Nahor and his wife Milcah were unwilling to go, and did not go at present; that, seeing they refused, the venerable Terah left them; and though not the first mover in the affair, yet, being the head of the family, he is said to have *taken* Abram, and Sarai, and Lot, and journeyed towards Canaan; that, stopping within the country of Mesopotamia, he called the place where he pitched his tent Haran, in memory of his son who died in Ur of the Chaldees; finally, that during his residence in this place he died, being two hundred and five years old.

But though Nahor and Milcah, as it should seem, refused to accompany the family at the time, yet as we find them in the course of the history settled at Haran, and Abraham and Isaac sending to them for wives, to the rejection of the idolaters among whom they lived, we may conclude that they afterwards repented. And thus the whole of Terah's family, though they do not go to Canaan, yet are rescued from Chaldean idolatry; and, settling in Haran, maintain for a considerable time the worship of the true God.

Chap. xii. 1—3. But Abram must not stop at Haran. Jehovah, by whom he was called to depart from Ur, has another country in reserve for him; and he being the great patriarch of Israel, and of the church of God, we have here a more particular account of his call. It was fit that this should be clearly and fully stated, as it went to lay the foundation of a new order of things in the world. It was therefore like the spring of a great river; or rather like the hole of a quarry whence the first stone was taken of which a city was built. It is this which is referred to for the encouragement of the church when in a low condition, and likely to become extinct. God *called Abram alone, and blessed him, and increased him.* Hence the faithful are directed to "look to the rock whence they were hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence they were digged;" and to depend upon his promise who assured them he would comfort the waste places of Zion.

How long Abram continued at Haran we are not told; but, about nine years after his departure from it, we read of his having three hundred and eighteen trained servants, who were "born in his house:" he must therefore have kept house between twenty and thirty years at least before that time, either in Haran, or in both Ur and Haran.

In the call of Abram we may observe, 1. The *grace* of it. There appears no reason to conclude that he was better than his neighbors. He did not choose the Lord, but the Lord him, and brought him out from amongst the idolaters.—Neh. ix. 7. 2. Its *peremptory tone:* "Get thee out." The language very much resembles that of Lot to his sons-in-law, and indicates the great danger of his present situation, and the immediate necessity of escaping as it were for his life. Such is the condition of

every unconverted sinner, and such the necessity of fleeing from the wrath to come to the hope set before us in the gospel. 3. The *self-denial* required by it. He was called to leave his country, his kindred, and even his father's house, if they refused to go with him: and no doubt his mind was made up to do so. Such things are easier to read concerning others than to practice ourselves; yet he that hateth not father and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, in comparison of Christ, cannot be his disciple. We may not be called upon to part with them; but our minds must be made up to do so, if they stand between us and Christ. 4. The *implicit faith* which a compliance with it would call for. Abram was to leave all and to go . . . . he knew not whither . . . . *unto a land that God would show him.* If he had been told that it was a land flowing with milk and honey, and that he should be put in possession of it, there had been some food for sense to feed upon: but to go out, "not knowing whither he went," must have been a little trying to flesh and blood. Nor was this all: that which was promised was not only in general terms, but very *distant.* God did not tell him he would *give* him the land, but merely *show* him it. Nor did he in his life-time obtain the possession of it: he was only a sojourner in it, without so much as a place to set his foot upon. He obtained a spot it is true, to lay his bones in, but that was all. In this manner were things ordered on purpose to try his faith; and his obedience to God under such circumstances was among the things which rendered him an example to future generations, even "the father of all them that believe."

Ver. 2. The promise had reference to things which could be but of small account to an eye of sense; but faith would find enough in it to satisfy the most enlarged desires. The objects, though distant, were worth waiting for. He should be the father of "a great nation;" and what was of greater account, and which was doubtless understood, that nation should be the Lord's. God himself would *bless him;* and this would be more than the whole world without it. God would also *make his name great;* not in the records of worldly fame, but in the history of the church: and, being himself full of the blessing of the Lord, it should be his to impart blessedness to the world: "I will bless thee, and thou shalt be a blessing." The great names among the heathen would very commonly arise from their being plagues and curses to mankind; but he should have the honor and happiness of being great in goodness, great in communicating light and life to his species.

This promise has been fulfilling ever since. All the true blessedness which the world is now, or shall hereafter be possessed of, is owing to Abram and his posterity. Through them we have a Bible, a Saviour, and a gospel. They are the stock on which the Christian Church is grafted. Their very dispersions and punishments have proved the riches of the world. What then shall be their recovery, but life from the dead? It would seem as if the conversion of the Jews, whenever it shall take place, will be a kind of resurrection to mankind. Such was the hope of this calling. And what could the friends of God and man desire more? Yet, as if all this were not enough, it is added—

Ver. 3. "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee." This is language never used but of an object of special favor. It is declaring that he should not only be blessed himself, but that all others should be blessed or cursed as they respected or injured him. Of this the histories of Abimelech, Laban, Potiphar, both the Pharaohs, Balak, and Balaam, furnish examples.

Finally: Lest what had been said of his being *made a blessing* should not be sufficiently explicit, it is added, "And in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." This was saying that a blessing was in reserve for all nations, and that it should be bestowed through him and his posterity, as the medium. Paul applies this to Christ, and the believing Gentiles being blessed in him: he calls it, "The gospel which was preached before unto Abraham." Peter also makes use of it in his address to those who had killed the Prince of life, to induce them to repent and believe in him. "Ye are the children of the prophets," says he, "and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. Unto you *first*, God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." As if he had said, You are descended from one whose posterity were to be blessed above all nations, and made a blessing. And, the time to favor the nations being now at hand, God sent his Son *first* to you, to bless you, and to prepare you for blessing them; as though it were yours to be a nation of ministers, or missionaries to the world. But how, if instead of blessing others you should continue accursed yourselves? You must first be blessed, ere you can, as the true seed of Abraham, bless the kindreds of the earth, and that by every one of you being turned from his iniquities.

Ver. 4. The faith of Abram operated in a way of prompt and implicit obedience.

First it induced him to leave Ur of the Chaldees, and now he must leave Haran. Haran was become the place of his father's sepulchre, yet he must not stop there, but press forward to the land which the Lord would show him. On this occasion, young Lot, his nephew, seems to have felt a cleaving to him, like that of Ruth to Naomi, and must needs go with him; encouraged no doubt by his uncle in some such manner as Moses afterwards encouraged Hobab: "Go with me, and I will do the good; for the Lord hath spoken good concerning" Abram.

Ver. 5. We now see Abram, being seventy-five years old, and Sarai, and Lot, with all they are and have, taking a long farewell of Haran, as they had done before of Ur. "The souls that they had gotten in Haran," could not refer to children, but perhaps to some godly servants who cast in their lot with them. Abram had a religious household, who were under his government, as we afterwards read, one of whom went to seek a wife for Isaac. We also read of one "Eliezer of Damascus," who seems to have been not only his household steward, but the only man he could think of, if he died childless, to be his heir. With these he set off for the land of Canaan, which by this time he knew to be the country that the Lord would show him; and to the land of Canaan he came.

DISCOURSE XIX.

ABRAM DWELLING IN CANAAN, AND REMOVING TO EGYPT ON ACCOUNT OF THE FAMINE.

Gen. xii. 6—20.

Ver. 6. Abram and his company, having entered the country at its north-eastern quarter, penetrate as far southward as *Sichem;* where meeting with a spacious plain, the plain of Moreh, they pitched their tents. This place was afterwards much accounted of. Jacob came thither on his return from Haran, and bought of the Shechemites a parcel of a field. It might be the same spot where Abram dwelt, and was perhaps selected by Jacob on that account. After this it seems to have been taken from him by the Amorites, the descendants of Hamor, of whom he had bought it; and he was obliged to recover it by the sword and by the bow. This was the portion which he gave to his son Joseph. There seems to be something in the history of this place very much resembling that of the country in general. In the grand division of the earth, this whole land was assigned to the posterity of Shem: but the Canaanites had seized on it, and, as is here noticed, "dwelt in the land." As soon therefore as the rightful owners are in a capacity to make use of the sword and the bow, they must be dispossessed of it.—See on ch. x. 25.

Ver. 7. Abram having pitched his tent at Sichem, the Lord renews to him the promise of the whole land, or rather to his seed after him; for, with respect to himself, he was never given to expect any higher character than that of a sojourner. But, considering the great ends to be answered by his seed possessing it, he is well satisfied, and rears an altar to Jehovah. One sees here the difference between the conduct of the men of this world and that of the Lord's servants. The former no sooner find a fruitful plain than they fall to building a city and a tower, to perpetuate their fame. The first concern of the latter is to raise an altar to God. It was thus that the new world was consecrated by Noah, and now the land of promise by Abram. The rearing of an altar in the land was like taking possession of it, in right, for Jehovah.

Ver. 8, 9. The patriarchs seldom continued long at a place, for they were sojourners. Abram removes from the plain of Moreh, to a mountain on the east of what was afterwards called Bethel; and here he built an altar, and called upon the name of the Lord. This place was also much accounted of, in after times. It was not far hence that Jacob slept and dreamed, and anointed the pillar. We may on various occasions change places, provided we carry the true religion with us; in this we must never change.

Ver. 10—20. Abram was under the necessity of removing again, and that on account of a grievous famine in the land. He must now leave Canaan for a while, and journey into Egypt, where corn, it seems, was generally plentiful, even when it was scarce in other countries, because that country was watered not so much by rain as by the waters of the Nile. Hither therefore the patriarch repaired with his little company. And here we see new trials for his faith. Observe,

1. The famine itself being in *the land of promise* must be a trial to him. Had he been of the spirit of the unbelieving spies, in the times of Moses, he would have said, Would God we had stayed at Haran, if not at Ur! Surely this is a land that eateth up the inhabitants.—But thus far Abram sinned not.

2. The beauty of Sarai was another trial to him; and here he fell into the sin of dissimulation, or at least of equivocation. She was half-sister to him, it seems (see on ch. xi. 27—29:) but not in such a sense

as he meant to convey. This was one of the first faults we read of in Abram's life; and the worst of it is that it was repeated, as we shall see hereafter. It is remarkable that there is only one faultless character on record; and more so that, in several instances of persons who have been distinguished for some one excellence, their principal failure has been in that particular. Thus Peter, the bold, sins through fear; Solomon, the wise, by folly; Moses, the meek, by speaking unadvisedly with his lips; and Abram the faithful, by a kind of dissimulation arising from timid distrust. Such things would almost seem designed of God to stain the pride of all flesh, and to check all dependence upon the most eminent or confirmed habits of godliness.

2. Yet from these trials, and from the difficulties into which, he had brought himself by his own misconduct, the Lord mercifully delivered him. He feared they would kill him for his wife's sake; but God, by introducing plagues among them, inspired them with fear, and induced them to send him and his wife away in safety. It was thus that he rebuked kings for their sakes, and suffered no man to hurt them. In how many instances has God, by his kind providence, extricated us from situations into which our own sin and folly had plunged us!

DISCOURSE XX.

THE SEPARATION OF ABRAM AND LOT.

Genesis xiii.

VER. 1—4. Till now we have heard nothing of Lot, since he left Haran; but he appears to have been one of Abram's family, and to have gone with him whithersoever he went. Here we find him returning with him from Egypt, first to the south of Canaan, and afterwards to Bethel, the place of his second residence, where he before built an altar. The manner in which "the place of the altar" is mentioned seems to intimate that he chose to go thither, in preference to any other place on this account. It is very natural that he should do so; for the places where we have called upon the name of the Lord, and enjoyed communion with him, are, by association, endeared to us above all others. There Abram again called on the name of the Lord, and the present exercises of grace, we may suppose, were aided by the remembrance of the past. It is an important rule, in choosing our habitations, to have an eye to the place of the altar If Lot had acted upon this principle, he would not have done as is here related of him.

Ver. 5, 6. We find by the second verse that Abram was very rich; and here we see that Lot also had "flocks, and herds, and tents;" so that "the land was not able to bear them, that they should dwell together." It is pleasing to see how the blessing of the Lord attends these two sojourners: but it is painful to find that prosperity should become the occasion of their separation. It is a pity that those whom grace unites, and who are fellow-heirs of eternal life, should be parted by the lumber of this world. Yet so it is. A clash of worldly interests has often separated chief friends, and been the occasion of a much greater loss than the greatest earthly fulness has been able to compensate. It is not thus with the riches of grace, or of glory; the more we have of them, the closer we are united.

Ver. 7. The first inconvenience which arose from the wealth of these two good men appeared in strifes between the herdmen. It was better to be so, than if the masters had fallen out; but even this is far from pleasant. Those of each would tell their tale to their masters, and try to persuade them that the others had used them ill; and the best of men, hearing such tales frequently repeated, would begin to suspect that all was not fair. What can be done? "The Canaanite and the Perizzite also dwelt in the land." Now Abram and Lot having never joined in the idolatries and wickednesses of the country, must needs have been marked as a singular kind of men, and passed as worshippers of the invisible God. If therefore they fall out about worldly matters, what will be thought and said of their religion? See how these religious people love one another!"

Ver. 8, 9. Abram's conduct in this unpleasant business was greatly to his honor. To form a just judgment of any character, we must follow him through a number of different situations and circumstances, and observe how he acts in times of trial. We have seen Abram in his first conversion from idolatry; we have noticed the strength of his faith, and the promptness of his obedience to the heavenly call; we have admired his godly and consistent conduct in every place where he has sojourned, one instance only excepted; but we have not yet seen how he would act in a case of approaching difference with a friend, a brother Here then we have it. Observe,

1. He foresees the danger there is of a falling out between himself and Lot. It is likely he perceived that his countenance was not towards him as heretofore, and that he discovered an uneasiness of mind. This would excite a becoming apprehension lest,

that which begun with the servants should end with the masters, and be productive of great evil to them both.

2. He deprecates it in the frankest most pacific, and most affectionate manner, "Let there be no strife between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen, for we are brothren." Yes, brethren, not only in the flesh, but in the Lord.

3. He makes a most wise and generous proposal. "The whole land is before us: separate thyself, I pray thee from me. If thou wilt go to the left hand, I will go to the right; or, if thou wilt go to the right hand then I will go to the left." As the elder man, Abram might have insisted upon the right of choosing his part of the country first; and especially as he was the principal, and Lot only accompanied him; he might have told him that if he was not contented to live with him he might go whither he would; but thus did not Abram. No, he would rather forego his civil rights than invade religious peace. What a number of bitter animosities in families, in churches, and I may say in nations, might be prevented, if the parties could be brought to act towards one another in this open, pacific, disinterested, and generous manner. There are cases in which it becomes necessary for very worthy and dear friends to separate: it were better to part than live together at variance. Many may be good neighbors who could not live happily in the same family. Abram and Lot could love and pray for one another when there was nothing to ruffle their feelings: and Saul and Barnabas could both serve the cause of Christ, though unhappily, through a third person, they cannot act in close concert. In all such cases, if there be only an upright, pacific, and disinterested disposition, things will be so adjusted as to do no material injury to the cause of Christ. In many instances it may serve to promote it. In a world where there is plenty of room to serve the Lord, and plenty of work to be done, if those who cannot continue together be disposed to improve their advantages, the issue may be such as shall cause the parties to unite in a song of praise.

Ver. 10, 11. But how does young Lot conduct himself on this occasion? He did not, nor could he, object to the pacific and generous proposal that was made to him; nor did he choose Abram's situation, which, though lovely in the one to offer, it would have been very unlovely in the other to have accepted; and I hope, though nothing is said of his making any reply, it was not from a spirit of sullen reserve. But, in the choice he made he appears to have regarded temporal advantages only, and entirely to have overlooked the danger of his situation with regard to religion. "He lifted up his eyes and beheld a well watered plain;" and on this he fixed his choice, though it led him to take up his abode in Sodom. He viewed it, as we should say, merely with a grazier's eye. He had better have been in a wilderness than there. Yet many professors of religion, in choosing situations for themselves and for their children, continue to follow his example. We shall perceive, in the sequel of the story, what kind of a harvest his well-watered plain produced him!

Ver. 12, 13. It is possible, after all, that his principal fault lay in pitching his tent in the place he did. If he could have lived on the plain, and preserved a sufficient distance from that infamous place, there might have been nothing the matter: but perhaps he did not like to live alone, and therefore dwelt *in the cities* of the plain, and pitched his tent *towards Sodom*. The love of society, like all other natural principles, may prove a blessing or a curse; and we may see, by this example, the danger of leaving religious connections; for, as man feels it not good to be alone, if he forego these he will be in a maner impelled by his inclinations to take up with others of a contrary description. It is an awful character which is here given of Lot's new neighbors. All men are sinners; but they were "wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly." When Abram went to a new place, it was usual for him to rear an altar to the Lord; but there is no mention of any thing like this when Lot settled in or near to Sodom. But to return to Abram—

Ver. 14—17. From the call of this great man to the command to offer up his son, a period of about fifty years, he was often tried and the promise was often renewed. It was the will of God that he should live by faith. Its being renewed at this time seems to have been on occasion of Lot's departure from him, and the disinterested spirit which he had manifested on that occasion. Lot had lifted up *his* eyes and beheld the plain of Jordan; and, being gone to take possession of it, God saith unto Abram, Lift up *thine* eyes, and look northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward; for all the land which thou seest, to the *thee* will I give it, and to thy seed forever. Thus he who sought this world lost it; and he who was willing to give up any thing for the honor of God and religion found it.

Ver. 18. After this, Abram removed to "the plain of Mamre, which is Hebron," where he continued many years. It was here, a long time after, that Sarah died. It lay about two and twenty miles south of Jerusalem. This removal might possibly arise from regard to Lot, that he might be nearer to him than he would have been at

Bethel, though not so near as to interfere with his temporal concerns. Of this we are certain, he was able from a place near where he lived, to descry the plains of Sodom; and, when the city was destroyed, saw the smoke ascend like that of a furnace. Here, as usual, Abram built him an altar unto Jehovah.

DISCOURSE XXI.

ABRAM'S SLAUGHTER OF THE KINGS.

Gen. xiv.

It has been already observed that, to form a just judgment of character, we must view men in divers situations: we should not have expected, however, to find Abram in the character of a warrior. Yet so it is: for once in his life, though a man of peace, he is constrained to take the sword. We have seen in him the friend of God, and the friend of a good man; now we shall see in him the *friend of his country*, though at present only a sojourner in it. The case seems to be as follows:—

Ver. 1—7. *Elam* and *Shinar*, or Persia and Babylon and the country about them, being that part of the world where the sons of Noah begun to settle after they went out of the ark, it was there that population and the art of war would first arrive at sufficient maturity to induce them to attempt the subjugation of their neighbors. Nimrod began this business in about a century after the flood, and his successors were no less ambitious to continue it. The rest of the world, emigrating from those countries, would be considered as colonies which ought to be subject to the parent states. Such it seems, were the ideas of *Chedorlaomer*, who was at this time king of Elam, or Persia. About three or four years before Abram left Chaldea he had invaded Palestine; which being divided into little kingdoms, almost every city having its king, and having made but little progress in the art of war in comparison of the parent nations fell an easy prey to his rapacity. In this humiliating condition they continued twelve years; but being by that time weary of the yoke, five of these petty kings, understanding one another, thought they might venture to throw it off. Accordingly, the next year they refused to pay him tribute, or to be subject to the authority under which he had placed them.

Chedorlaomer hearing of this, calls together his friends and allies among the first and greatest nations; who consent to join their forces, and go with him to reduce these petty states to obedience. Four kings and their armies engage in this expedition. If each one only brought five hundred men with him, they would form a great host for that early age of the world, and capable of doing a great deal of mischief. This they did: for, not content with marching peaceably through the country till they arrived at the cities which had rebelled, they laid all places waste which they came at; smiting in their way, first the *Rephaims*, the *Zurims*, and the *Emims;* then the *Horites* of Mount Seir, and after them the *Amalekites* and the *Amorites*.

Ver. 8—10. By this time Abram's neighbors, the kings of *Sodom*, *Admah*, *Zeboim*, and *Bela*, must have been not a little alarmed. They and their people, however, determine to fight—and fight they did. The field of action was "the vale of Siddim." Unhappily, the ground was full of slime pits, or pits of bitumen, much like those on the plains of Shinar; and their soldiers being but little skilled in the art of war could not keep their ranks, and so were foiled, routed and beaten, by the superior discipline of the invaders. Many were slain in the pits, and those that escaped fled to a neighboring mountain, which, being probably covered with wood, afforded them a shelter in which to hide themselves.

Ver. 11, 12. The conquerors, without delay, betake themselves to the spoil. They take all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all the victuals; and what few people are left they take for slaves. Among these was Lot, Abram's brother's son, his friend, and the companion of his travels, with all his family and all his goods; and this notwithstanding he was only a sojourner, but lately come among them, and seems to have taken no part in the war. Oh Lot, these are the fruits of taking up thy residence in Sodom; or rather the first-fruits of it: the harvest is yet to come!

Ver. 13. Among those who fled from the drawn sword, and the fearfulness of war, there was one who reached the plain of Mamre, and told the sad tale to Abram. Abram feels much: but what can he do? Can he raise an army wherewith to spoil the spoilers and deliver the captives? He will try. Yes, from his regard to Lot, whose late faults would be now forgotten and his former love recur to mind: and, if he succeed, he will not only deliver him but many others. The cause is a just one; and God has promised to *bless Abram and make him a blessing*. Who can tell but he may prove in this instance a blessing to the whole country, by delivering it from the power of a cruel foreign oppressor?

Now we shall see how the Lord hath blessed Abram. Who would have thought it? He is able to raise three hundred and eighteen men in his own family; men well

instructed too, possessing skill, principle, and courage. Moreover, Abram was so well respected by his neighbors, *Mamre*, *Eschol*, and *Aner*, that they had already formed a league of confederacy with him to defend themselves, perhaps, against this blustering invader, whose coming had been talked of more than a year ago; and they, with all the forces they can muster, consent to join with Abram in the pursuit.

Ver. 15, 16. By prompt movements, Abram and his troop soon came up with the enemy. It was in the dead of night. The conquerors, it is likely, were off their guard, thinking, no doubt, that the country was subdued, and that scarcely a dog was left in it that dare move his tongue against them. But when haughty men say Peace, peace,—lo, sudden destruction cometh! Attacked after so many victories, they are surprised and confounded: and it being in the night, they could not tell but their assailants might be ten times more numerous than they were. So they flee in confusion, and are pursued from Dan even to Hobah in Syria, a distance, it is said, of fourscore miles. In this battle, Chedorlaomer, and the kings who were with him, were all slain. Abram's object, however, was the recovery of Lot and his family; and, having accomplished this, he is satisfied. It is surprising that amidst all this confusion and slaughter their lives should be preserved; yet so it was: and he with his property, and family, and all the other captives taken with him, are brought safe back again. It was ill for Lot to be found among the men of Sodom; but it was well for them that he was so, else they had been ruined before they were.

Ver. 17—24. This expedition of Abram and his friends excited great attention among the Canaanites. At the very time when all must have been given up for lost, lo, they are, without any effort of their own, recovered, and the spoilers spoiled! The little victorious band, now returning in peace, are hailed by every one that meets them: nay, the kings of the different cities go forth to congratulate them, and to thank them as the deliverers of the country. If Abram had been of the disposition of those marauders whom he had defeated, he would have followed up his victory and made himself master of the whole country; which he might probably have done with ease in their present enfeebled and scattered condition. But thus did not Abram, because of the fear of God.

In the valley of *Shaveh*, not far from Jerusalem, he was met and congratulated by the king of Sodom, who by some means had escaped in the day of battle, when so many of his people were slain. He was also met in the same place, and at the same time, by another king, of high character in the Scriptures, though but rarely mentioned, namely, "Melchisedek, king of Salem." He came, not only to congratulate the conquerors, but brought forth "bread and wine" to refresh them after their long fatigues.

The sacred historian, having here me with what I may call a lily among thorns, stops, as it were, to describe it. Let us stop with him and observe the description. Mention is made of this singular man only in three places; viz. here, in the 110th Psalm, and in the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. He is held up in the two latter places as a type of the Messiah. Three things may be remarked concerning him:—1. He was doubtless a very holy man; and, if a Canaanite by descent, it furnishes a proof, among many others, that the curse on Canaan did not shut the door of faith upon his individual descendants. There never was an age or country in which he that feared God and worked righteousness was not accepted. 2. He was a personage in whom were united the kingly and priestly offices; and, as such, he was a type of the Messiah, and greater than Abram himself. Under the former of these characters, he was by interpretation "king of righteousness, and king of peace;" and, under the latter, was distinguished as the "priest of the most high God." This singular dignity conferred upon a descendant of Canaan shows that God delights on various occasions, to put more abundant honor upon the part that lacketh. 3. He was what he was, considered as a priest, *not by inheritance*, but *by an immediate divine constitution*. Though as a man he was born like other men, yet as a priest he was "without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God, abiding a priest continually." That is, neither his father nor his mother was of a sacerdotal family; he derived his office from no predecessor, and delivered it up to no successor, but was himself an order of priesthood. It is in this respect that he was "made like unto the Son of God;" who also was a priest, not after the manner of the sons of Aaron, by descent from their predecessors (for he descended from Judah, of which tribe Moses said nothing concerning priesthood;) but after the similitude of Melchisedek, that is by an immediate divine constitution; or, as the New Testament writer expresses it, "by the word of oath;" and, "continuing ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood."

Ver. 19, 20. Melchisedek being "priest of the most high God," he in that character blessed Abram. It belonged to the priests, by divine appointment, to bless the people. In this view the blessing of Melchisedek

would contain more than a personal well-wishing; it would be prophetic. In pronouncing it, he would set his official seal to what God had done before him. It is not unlikely that he might know Abram previously to this, and be well acquainted with his being a favorite of heaven, in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed, and to whose posterity God had promised the land of the Canaanites; and, if so, his blessing him in so solemn a manner implies his acquiescence in the divine will, even though it would be at the expense of his ungodly countrymen. His speaking of the Most High God as "possessor of heaven and earth" would seem to intimate as much as this; as it recognizes the *principle* on which the right of Abram's posterity to possess themselves of Canaan depended. There is much heart in the blessing. We see the good man, as well as the priest of the Most High God, in it: from blessing Abram it rises to the blessing of Abram's God, for all the goodness conferred upon him.

In return for this solemn blessing, Abram "gave him tithes of all." This was treating him in character, and, in fact, presenting the tenth of his spoils as an offering to God.

Ver. 21. All this time the king of Sodom stood by, and heard what passed: but it seems without feeling any interest in it. What passed between these two great characters appears to have made no impression upon him. He thought of nothing, and cared for nothing, but what respected himself. He could not possibly claim any right to what was recovered, either of persons or things; yet he asks for the former, and speaks in a manner as if he would be thought not a little generous in relinquishing the latter.

Ver. 22, 23. Abram knew the man and his communications; and, perceiving his affected generosity, gave him to understand that he had already decided, and even sworn in the presence of the Most High God, what he would do in respect of that part of the spoils which had previously belonged to him. Abram knew full well that the man who affected generosity in relinquishing what was not his own would go on to boast of it, and to reflect on him as though he shone in borrowed plumes. No, says the patriarch, "I will not take from a thread even to a shoe-latchet that which was thine, save that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men that went with me, Aner, Eschol, and Mamre."

In this answer of Abram we may observe, besides the above, several particulars:—

1. The *character* under which he had sworn to God: "*Jehovah*, the Most High God, the possessor of heaven and earth." The former of these names was that by which God was made known to Abram, and still more to his posterity.* The latter was that which had been just given to him by Melchisedek, and which appears to have made a strong impression on Abram's mind. By uniting them together, he, in a manner, acknowledged Melchisedek's God to be his God; and, while reproving the king of Sodom, expressed his love to him as to a brother.

2. His having decided the matter *before* the king of Sodom met him, as it seems he had, implies something highly dishonorable in the character of that prince. He must have been well known to Abram, as a vain, boasting, unprincipled man, or he would not have resolved in so solemn a manner to preserve himself clear from the very shadow of an obligation to him. And considering the polite and respectful manner in which it was common for this patriarch to conduct himself towards his neighbors, there must have been something highly offensive in this case to draw from him so cutting and dismaying an intimation. It is not unlikely that he had thrown out some malignant insinuations against Lot and his old wealthy uncle, on the score of their religion. If so, Abram would feel happy in an opportunity of doing good against evil, and thus of heaping coals of fire upon his head.

The reason why he would not be under the shadow of an obligation, or any thing which might be construed an obligation, to him, was not so much a regard to his own honor as the honor of HIM in whose name he had sworn. Abram's God had blessed him, and promised to bless him more, and make him a blessing. Let it not be said by his enemies, that, with all his blessedness, it is of our substance that he is what he is. No, Abram can trust in "the possessor of heaven and earth" to provide for him, without being beholden to the king of Sodom.

3. His excepting the portion of the young men who were in league with him shows a just sense of propriety. In giving up our own right, we are not at liberty to give away that which pertains to others connected with us.

Upon the whole, this singular undertaking

* What Moses says in Exod. vi. 3, that God appeared to "Abram, Isaac, and Jacob, by the name of *God Almighty*," but that by his name "JEHOVAH" he was not known to them, cannot be understood absolutely. It does not appear, however, to have been used among the patriarchs in so peculiar a sense as it was after the time of Moses among the Israelites. Thence it seems very generally to denote the specific name of the God and King of Israel. In this view we perceive the force and propriety of such language as the following:—"*Jehovah* is our judge, *Jehovah* is our lawgiver, *Jehovah* is our king."—"Oh *Jehovah*, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!"

would raise Abram much in the estimation of the Canaanites, and might possibly procure a little more respect to Lot. It had been better in the latter, however, if he had taken this opportunity to have changed his dwelling place.

DISCOURSE XXII.

ABRAM JUSTIFIED BY FAITH.

Genesis xv. 1—6.

ABRAM was the father of the faithful, the example or pattern of all future believers; and perhaps no man, upon the whole, had greater faith. It seems to have been the design of God, in almost all his dealings with him, to put his faith to the trial. In most instances it appeared unto praise, though in some it appeared to fail him.

Ver. 1. Several years had elapsed, perhaps eight or nine, since God had first made promise to him concerning his *seed:* and now he is about eighty years old, and Sarai is seventy, and he has no child. He must yet live upon assurances and promises, without any earthly prospects. He is indulged with a vision, in which God appears to him, saying, "Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." This is certainly very full and very encouraging. If, after having engaged the kings, he had any *fears* of the war being renewed, this would allay them. Who shall harm those to whom Jehovah is a *shield?* Or, if, on having no child, he had fears at times lest all should prove a blank, this would meet them. What can be wanting to those who have God for their "exceeding great reward?" Abram had not availed himself of his late victory to procure in Canaan so much as a place to set his foot on: but he shall lose nothing by it. God has something greater in reserve for him: God himself will be his reward; not only as he is of all believers, but in a sense peculiar to himself: he shall be the father of the church, and the heir *of the world.*

Ver. 2, 3. Who would have thought, amidst these exceeding great and precious promises, that Abram's faith should seem to fail him? Yet so it is. The promise, to be sure, is great and full: but he has heard much the same things before, and there are no signs of its accomplishment. This works within him in a way of secret anguish, which he presumes to express before the Lord, almost in the language of objection; "Lord God, what wilt thou give me?" "Thou speakest of *giving* thy servant this and that . . . . but I shall soon be past receiving it . . . . I go childless. This Eliezer of Damascus is a good and faithful servant; but that is all . . . . Must I make him my heir; and are the promises to be fulfilled at last in an adopted son?"

Ver. 4—6. God, in mercy to the patriarch, condescends to remove his doubts on this subject, assuring him that his heir should descend from his own body; yet he must continue to live upon promises. These promises, however, are confirmed by a sign. He is led abroad from his tent in the night time, and shown the stars of heaven; which when he had seen, the Lord assured him, "So shall thy seed be." And now his doubts are removed. He is no longer weak, but strong in faith: he staggers not through unbelief, but is fully persuaded that what God has promised he is able to perform. And therefore "it was imputed to him for righteousness."

Much is made of this passage by the apostle Paul, in establishing the doctrine of justification by faith; and much has been said by others, as to the meaning of both him and Moses. One set of expositors, considering it as extremely evident that by faith is here meant *the act of believing*, contend for this as our justifying righteousness. Faith, in their account, seems to be imputed to us for righteousness by a kind of gracious compromise, in which God accepts of an imperfect instead of a perfect obedience. Another set of expositors, jealous for the honor of free grace, and of the righteousness of Christ, contend that the faith of Abram is here taken *objectively*, for the righteousness of Christ believed in. To me it appears that both these expositions are forced. To establish the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ, it is not necessary to maintain that the faith of Abram means Christ in whom he believed. Nor can this be maintained: for it is manifestly the same thing, in the account of the apostle Paul, as *believing* (Rom. iv. 5,) which is very distinct from the object believed in. The truth appears to be this; It is faith, or believing, that is accounted for righteousness; not however as a righteous act, or on account of any inherent virtue contained in it, but in *respect of Christ, on whose righteousness it terminates.**

That we may form a clear idea, both of the text and the doctrine, let the following particulars be considered.

1. Though Abram believed God when he left Ur of the Chaldees, yet his faith in that instance is not mentioned in *connexion* with his justification; nor does the apostle, either in his Epistle to the Romans or in that to the Galatians, argue that doctrine from it, or hold it up as an example of justifying faith. I do not mean to suggest that

* Calvin's Institutes, Book III. Chap. XI. § 7.

Abram was then in an unjustified state; but that the instance of his faith which was thought proper by the Holy Spirit to be selected as the model for believing for justification was not this, nor any other of the kind: but those only in which there was an *immediate respect had to the person of the Messiah.* The examples of faith referred to in both these epistles are taken from his believing the promises relative to his *seed;* in which seed, as the apostle observes, *Christ* was included.—Rom. iv. 11; Gal. iii. 16. Though Christians may believe in God with respect to the common concerns of this life, and such faith may ascertain their being in a justified state; yet this is not, strictly speaking, the faith by which they are justified, which invariably *has respect to the person and work of Christ.* Abram believed in God as *promising* Christ; they believe in him as having "raised him from the dead." "By him, all that believe (that is, *in him*) are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses." It is through *faith in his blood* that they obtain remission of sin. He "is just, and the justifier of him that *believeth in Jesus.*"

2. This distinction, so clearly perceivable both in the Old and New Testament, sufficiently decides in what sense faith is considered as justifying. Whatever other properties the magnet may possess, it is as pointing invariably to the north that it guides the mariner: so, whatever other properties faith may possess, it is as *pointing to Christ,* and bringing us into union *with him,* that it justifies.—Rom. viii. 1; 1 Cor. i. 30; Phil. iii. 9. It is not that *for the sake of which* we are accepted of God; for, if it were, justification by faith could not be opposed to justification by works; nor would boasting be excluded; neither would there be any meaning in its being said to be by faith, *that it might be of grace:* but believing in Christ, we are considered by the Lawgiver of the world as one with him, and so are forgiven and accepted *for his sake.* Hence it is that to be justified by faith is the same thing as to be justified *by the blood of Christ,* or made righteous *by his obedience.*—Rom. v. 9. 19. Faith is not the grace wherein we stand, but that by which we *have access* to it.—Rom. v. 2. Thus it is that the healing of various maladies in the New Testament is ascribed to faith: not that the virtue which caused the cures proceeded from this as its proper cause; but this was a necessary concomitant to give the parties *access* to the power and grace of the Saviour, by which only they were healed.

3. The phrase "Counted it for righteousness" does not mean that God thought it to be what it was, which would have been merely an act of justice; but his graciously reckoning it what in itself it was not, viz. a ground for the bestowment of covenant blessings. Even in the case of Phinehas, of whom the same phrase is used in reference to his zeal for God, it has this meaning; for one single act of zeal, whatever may be said of it, could not entitle him and his posterity after him to the honor conferred upon them. Ps. cvi. 30, 31, comp. Num. xxv. 11—13. And with respect to the present case, "The phrase as the apostle uses it it," says a great writer, "manifestly imports that God, of his sovereign grace, is pleased in his dealings with the sinner, to take and regard that which indeed is not righteousness, and in one who has no righteousness, so that the consequence shall be the same as if he had righteousness, and which may be from the *respect which it bears* to something which is indeed righteousness."* The faith of Abram, though of a holy nature, yet contained nothing *in itself* fit for a justifying righteousness: all the adaptedness which it possessed to that end was the respect which it had to the Messiah, on whom it terminated.†

4. Though faith is not our justifying righteousness, yet it is a necessary concomitant and means of justification; and, being the grace which above all others honors Christ, it is that which above all others God delights to honor. Hence it is that justification is ascribed to it, rather than to the righteousness of Christ without it. Our Saviour might have said to Bartimeus, Go thy way, *I* have made thee whole. This would have been truth, but not the whole of the truth which it was his design to convey. The necessity of faith in order to healing would not have appeared from this mode of speaking, nor had any honor been done or encouragement given to it; but by his saying, "Go thy way, *thy faith* hath

* President Edwards's *Sermons on Justification.* Disc. I. p. 9.

† From the above remarks, we may be able to solve an apparent difficulty in the case of Cornelius. He "feared God," and "his alms and prayers came up for a memorial before God." He must therefore have been at that time in *a state of salvation.* Yet after this he was directed, to send for Peter, who should *tell him words by which he and all his house* SHOULD BE SAVED.—Acts x. 2. 4; xi. 14. What Abram was in respect of justification, before he heard and believed what was promised him concerning the Messiah, Cornelius was in respect of salvation before he heard and believed the words by which he was to be saved. Both were the *subjects* of faith according to their light. Abram believed from the time that he left Ur of the Chaldees; and Cornelius could not have *feared God* without believing in him; but the *object* by which they were justified and saved was not from the first so clearly revealed to them as it was afterwards.

made thee whole," each of these ideas is conveyed. Christ would omit mentioning his own honor, as knowing that faith, having an immediate respect to him, amply provided for it.

DISCOURSE XXIII.

RENEWAL OF PROMISES TO ABRAM.

Gen. xv. 7—21.

Ver. 7. The Lord having promised Abram a numerous offspring, goes on to renew the promise of the land of Canaan for an inheritance; and this by a reference to what had been said to him when he first left the land of the Chaldees. It is God's usual way, in giving a promise, to refer to former promises of the same thing, which would show him to be of one mind, and intimate that he had not forgotten him, but was carrying on his designs of mercy towards him.

Ver. 8. Abram, however, ventures to ask for a sign by which he may know that by his posterity he may inherit the land. This request does not appear to have arisen from unbelief; but, having lately experienced the happy effects of a sign, he hopes thereby to be better armed against it.

Ver. 9. The purport of the answer seems to be, Bring me an offering, which I will accept at thy hand, and this shall be the sign. It is in condescension to our weakness that, in addition to his promises, the Lord has given us sensible signs, as in the ordinances of baptism and the supper. If it were desirable to Abram to know that he should inherit the earthly Canaan, it must be much more so to us to know that we shall inherit the heavenly Canaan; and God is willing that the heirs of promise should on this subject have strong consolation, and therefore has confirmed his word with on oath.

Ver. 10. Abram, obedient to the divine command, takes of the first and the best of his animals for a sacrifice. Their being *divided* in the midst was the usual form of sacrificing when a *covenant* was to be made. Each of the parties passed between the parts of the animals; q. d. Thus may I be cut asunder if I break this covenant! This was called *making a covenant by sacrifice.*—Jer. xxxiv. 18, 19. Psa. 1. 5. This process therefore, it appears, was accompanied with a solemn covenant between the Lord and his servant Abram.

Ver. 11. Having made ready the sacrifices he waited perhaps for the fire of God to consume them, which was the usual token of acceptance; but meanwhile the birds of prey came down upon them, which he was obliged to drive away. Interruptions, we see, attend the father of the faithful in his most solemn approaches to God; and interruptions of a different kind attend believers in theirs. How often do intruding cares, like unclean birds, seize upon that time, and those affections, which are devoted to God! Happy is it for us, if by prayer and watchfulness we can drive them away, so as to worship him without distraction.

Ver. 12—16. By the account taken together, it appears as if this was a day which Abram dedicated wholly to God. His first vision was before daylight, while the stars were yet to be seen: in the morning he prepares the sacrifices, and while he is waiting the sun goes down, and no immediate answer is given him. At this time he falls into a deep sleep, and now we may expect that God will answer him as he had done before, *by vision.* But what kind of vision is it? Not like that which he had before; but "lo, a horror of great darkness falls upon him." This might be designed in part to impress his mind with an awful reverence of God; for those who rejoice in him must rejoice with trembling: and partly to give him what he asked for, a *sign;* not merely that he should inherit the land, but of the way in which this promise should be accomplished, namely, by their first going down and enduring great affliction in Egypt. The light must be preceded by darkness. Such appears to be the interpretation given of it in the words which follow: "Know of surety that thy seed shall be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them four hundred years."* Egypt is not named; for prophecy requires to be delivered with some degree of obscurity, or it might tend to defeat its own design: but the thing is certain, and God will in the end avenge their cause. It is remarkable how the prophecies gradually open and expand, beginning with what is general, and proceding to particulars. Abram had never had so much revealed to him before, as to times and circumstances. He is given to understand that these things shall not take place in his day; but that he should first "go to his fathers," and that "in peace, and be buried in a good old age;" but that "in the fourth generation" after their going down they should return. It is enough to die such a death as this, though we see not all the promises fulfilled. The

* These four hundred years are rekoned by Ainsworth to have commenced from the time of Isaac's being weaned, when the Son of Hagar the Egyptian mocked. So that as soon as Abram's seed, according to the promise, was born, he began to be *afflicted,* and that by one of *Egyptian* extraction.

reason given for their being so long ere they were accomplished is, that "the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full." There is a fitness in all God's proceedings, and a wonderful fullness of design, answering many ends by one and the same event. The possession of Canaan was to Israel a promised good, but to the Canaanites a threatened evil. It is deferred towards both till each be prepared for it. As there is a time when God's promises to his people are ripe for accomplishment, so there is a time when his forbearance towards the wicked shall cease; and they often prove to be the same. The fall of Babylon was the deliverance of Judah; and the fall of another Babylon will be the signal for the kingdoms of this world becoming the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ.

Ver. 17. After this, when the sun was set, and it was dark, Abram, perhaps still in vision, has the sign repeated in another form. He sees a "smoking furnace," and "a burning lamp." The design of these, as well as the other, seems to be to show him what should take place hereafter. The former was an emblem of the affliction which his posterity should endure in Egypt, that "iron furnace" (Deut. iv. 20;) and the latter might denote the light that should arise to them in their darkness. If, like the pillar of fire in the wilderness, it was an emblem of the divine Majesty, its *passing through* the parts of the divine sacrifices would denote God's entering into covenant with his servant Abram, and that all the mercy which should come upon his posterity would be in virtue of it.

Ver. 18. That which had been hinted under a figure is now declared in express language. "The same day Jehovah made a *covenant* with Abram;" making over to his posterity, as by a solemn deed of gift, the whole land in which he then was, defining with great accuracy its exact boundaries; and this notwithstanding the afflictions which they should undergo in Egypt. Thus the burning lamp would succeed and dispel the darkness of the smoking furnace.

DISCOURSE XXIV.

SARAI'S CROOKED POLICY FOR THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE PROMISE.

Gen. xvi.

VER. 1—3. We have had several renewals of promises to Abram; but as yet no performance of them. Ten years had elapsed in Canaan, and things remained as they were. Now, though Abram's faith had been strengthened, yet that of Sarai fails. At her time of life, she thinks, there is no hope of seed in the ordinary way: if therefore the promise be fulfilled, it must be in the person of another. And, having a handmaid whose name was Hagar, she thinks of giving her to Abram to wife. Unbelief is very prolific of schemes; and surely this of Sarai is as carnal, as foolish, and as fruitful of domestic misery as almost any that could have been devised. Yet such was the influence of evil counsel, especially from such a quarter, that "Abram hearkened to her voice." The father of mankind sinned by hearkening to his wife, and now the father of the faithful follows his example. How necessary for those who stand in the nearest relation to take heed of being snares, instead of helps, one to another! It was a double sin: first, of distrust; and, secondly, of deviation from the original law of marriage; and seems to have opened a door to polygamy. We never read of two wives before, except those of Lamech, who was of the descendants of Cain; but here the practice is coming into the church of God. Two out of three of the patriarchs go into it; yet neither of them of his own accord. There is no calculating in how many instances this ill example has been followed, or how great a matter this little fire kindled. The plea used by Sarai in this affair shows how easy it is to err by a misconstruction of providence, and following that as a rule of conduct, instead of God's revealed will. "The Lord," says she, "hath restrained me from bearing;" and therefore I must contrive other means for the fulfilment of the promise! But why not enquire of the Lord? As in the crowning of Adonijah, the proper authority was not consulted.

Ver. 4, 5. The consequence was what might have been expected; the young woman is elated with the honor done her, and her mistress is despised in her eyes. And now, when it is too late, Sarai repents, and complains to her husband; breaking out into intemperate language, accusing him as the cause, as though he must needs have secretly encouraged her: "My wrong be upon thee!" Nor did she stop here; but, taking it for granted that her husband would not hear her, goes on to appeal to God himself: "The Lord judge between me and thee!" Those who are first in doing wrong are often the first in complaining of the effects, and in throwing the blame upon others. Loud and passionate appeals to God, instead of indicating a good cause, are commonly the marks of a bad one.

Ver. 6. Abram on this vexing occasion is meek and gentle. He had learned that a soft answer turneth away wrath: and therefore he refrained from upbraiding his wife, as he might easily have done; prefer-

ring domestic peace to the vindication of himself, and the placing of the blame where it ought to have lain. It is doubtful, however, whether he did not yield too much in this case; for though, according to the custom of those times, Hagar was not his wife only with respect to cohabitation, and without dividing the power with Sarai, yet she was entitled to protection, and should not have been given up to the will of one who on this occasion manifested nothing but jealousy, passion, and caprice. But he seems to have been brought into a situation wherein he was at a loss what to do; and thus as Sarai is punished for tempting him, he also is punished with a disordered house, for having yielded to the temptation. And now Sarai, incited by revenge, deals hardly with Hagar; much more so, it is likely, than she ought: for, though the young woman might have acted vainly and sinfully, yet her mistress is far from being a proper judge of the punishment which she deserved. The consequence is, as might be expected, she leaves the family, and goes into a wilderness. Indeed it were "better to dwell in a wilderness than with a contentious and angry woman." But as Sarai and Abram had each reaped the fruits of their sin, Hagar, in her turn, reaps the fruit of hers. If creatures act disorderly, God will act orderly and justly in dealing with them.

Ver. 7. 8. Hagar, however, though an Egyptian, shall reap advantage from her connection with Abram's family. Other heathens might have brought themselves into trouble and be left to grapple with it alone; but to her an angel from heaven is sent to afford direction and relief. Bending her course towards Egypt, her native country, and finding a spring of water in the wilderness, she sat down by it to refresh herself. While in this situation, she hears a voice, saying, "Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence comest thou; and whither wilt thou go?" She would perceive, by this language, that she was known, and conclude that it was no common voice that spoke to her. He that spoke to her is called "the angel of the Lord;" yet he afterwards says, *I* will multiply thy seed exceedingly. It seems therefore not to have been a created angel, but the same divine personage who frequently appeared to the fathers. In calling Hagar *Sarai's maid*, he seems tacitly to disallow of the marriage, and to lead her mind back to that humble character which she had formerly sustained. The questions put to her were close, but tender, and such as were fitly addressed to a person fleeing from trouble. The former might be answered, and was answered: "I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai." But with respect to the latter she is silent. We know our present grievances, and so can tell *whence we came*, much better than our future lot, or *whither we are going*. In many cases, if the truth were spoken, the answer would be from bad to worse. At present, this poor young woman seems to have been actuated by merely natural principles. In all her trouble there appears nothing like true religion, or committing her way to the Lord; yet she is sought out of him whom she sought not.

Ver. 9, 10. The counsel of God here was to return and submit. Wherefore? She had done wrong in despising her mistress, and must now be humbled for it. Hard as this might appear, it was the counsel of wisdom and mercy: a connection with the people of God, with all their faults, is far preferable to the best of this world, where God is unknown. If we have done wrong, whatever temptations or provocations we may have met with, the only way to peace and happiness is to retrace our footsteps in repentance and submission. For her encouragement, she is given to expect a portion of Abram's blessing, of which she must have often heard; namely, a numerous offspring. And by the manner in which this was promised,—"*I* will multiply thy seed,"—she would perceive that the voice which spake to her was no other than that of Abram's God.

Ver. 11. With respect to the child of which she was then pregnant, it is foretold that it should be a son, and that his name should be called *Ishmael*, or, *God shall hear*, from the circumstance of God having "heard her affliction." God is not said to have heard her prayer; for it does not appear that she had as yet ever called upon his name: she merely sat bewailing herself, as not knowing what would become of her. Yet, lo, the ear of mercy is open to affliction itself! The groans of the prisoner are heard of God: not only theirs who cry unto him, but in many cases, theirs who do not.

Ver. 12. The child is also characterized as *a wild man*, a bold and daring character, living by his bow in the wilderness, and much engaged in war; his hand being as it were, "against every man, and every man's hand against him:" yet that he should maintain his ground notwithstanding, "dwelling in the presence of all his brethren," and dying at last in peace.—See chap. xxv. 17, 18. Nor was this prophecy merely intended to describe Ishmael, but his posterity. Bishop Newton, in his dissertations on the prophecies, has shown that such has been the character of the Arabians, who descended from him, in all ages; a wild and warlike people, who, under all the conquests of other nations by the great powers of the earth, remained unsubdued.

Ver. 13, 14. The effect of this divine appearance on Hagar was to bring her to the knowledge and love of God; at least the account wears such an aspect. She who for any thing that appears, had never prayed before, now addresses herself to the angel who spoke to her, and whom she considers as *Jehovah*, calling him by an endearing name, the meaning of which is, *Thou God seest me.* She did not mean by this to acknowledge his omniscience so much as his mercy, in having *beheld* and pitied her affliction. On his withdrawing, she seems to have *looked after him*, with faith, and hope, and affectionate desire; and, reflecting upon what had passed, is overcome with the goodness of God towards her, exclaiming, "Have I also here looked after him that seeth me!" It was great mercy for God to have *looked* on her, and heard her afflictive moans; but it was greater to draw her heart to *look after him;* and greater still that he should do it *here*, in the wilderness, when she had lived so many years where prayers were wont to be made, in vain. Under the influence of these impressions, she calls the well by which she sat down *Beer-lahai-roi*, a name which would serve as a memorial of the mercy. Let this well, as if she had said, be called Jehovah's well, *the well of him that liveth and seeth me!* Thus God, in mercy, sets that right which, through human folly, had been thrown into disorder. Hagar returns and submits; bears Abram a son when he is fourscore and six years old; and Abram, on being informed of the prophecy which went before, called his name Ishmael.

DISCOURSE XXV.

GOD'S COVENANT WITH ABRAM AND HIS SEED.

Gen. xvii.

THIRTEEN years elapse, of which nothing is recorded. Hagar is submissive to Sarai, and Ishmael is growing up; but, as to Abram, things after all wear a doubtful aspect. It is true, God hath given him a son; but no intimations of his being the son of promise. No divine congratulations attend his birth; but on the contrary, Jehovah, who had been used to manifest himself with frequency and freedom, now seems to carry it reservedly to his servant. It is something *like* the thing which he had believed in; but not the thing itself. He has seen, as it were, a wind, a fire, and an earthquake; but the Lord is not in them.

Ver. 1. After this when he was ninety-nine years old, the Lord again appeared to him, and reminded him of a truth which he needed to have re-impressed; namely his *almighty power.* It was for want of considering this that he had recourse to crooked devices in order to accomplish the promise. This truth is followed by an admonition—"Walk before me, and be thou perfect;" which admonition implies a serious reproof. It was like saying, "Have recourse no more to unbelieving expedients; keep thou the path of uprightness, and leave me to fulfil my promise in the time and manner that seem good to me!" What a lesson is here afforded us, never to use unlawful means under the pretence of being more useful, or promoting the cause of God! Our concern is to walk before him, and be upright, leaving him to bring to pass his own designs in his own way.

Ver. 2, 3. Abram having been admonished, the promise is renewed to him; and, the time drawing near in which the seed should be born, the Lord declares his mind to make a solemn *covenant* with him, and to multiply him exceedingly. Such language denotes great kindness and condescension, with large designs of mercy. Abram was so much affected with it as to *fall on his face*, and in that posture "the Lord talked with him."

Ver. 4—6. It is observable that the last time in which mention is made of a covenant with Abram, (chap. xv. 18) God made over to his posterity the land of Canaan for a possession; but the design of this is more extensive, dwelling more particularly on their being *multiplied* and *blessed.* The very idea of a covenant is expressive of peace and good-will: and, in this and some other instances, it is not confined to the party, but extends to others for his sake. Thus, as we have seen, God made a covenant of peace, which included the preservation of the world; but it was with one man, even Noah, and the world was preserved for his sake. And the covenant in question is one that shall involve great blessings to the world in all future ages; yet it is not made with the world, but with Abram. God will give them blessings; but it shall be through him. Surely these things were designed to familiarize the great principle on which our salvation should rest. It was the purpose of God to save perishing sinners; yet his covenant is not originally with them, but with Christ. With him it stands fast; and for his sake they are accepted and blessed. Even the blessedness of Abram himself, and all the rewards conferred on him, were for his sake. He was justified, as we have seen, not by his own righteousness, but by faith in the promised Messiah.

Moreover: A covenant being a solemn agreement, and indicating a design to walk together in amity, it was proper there should

be an understanding, as we should say between tha parties. When Israel came to have a king, "Samuel told them the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the Lord." Thus, as Abram is about to commence the father of a family, who were to be God's chosen people, it was fit at the outset that he should not only be encouraged by promises, but directed how he and his descendants should conduct themselves.

The first promise in this covenant is, that he shall be "the father of many nations;" and, as a token of it, his name in future is to be called ABRAHAM. He had the name of a *high*, or eminent, *father*, from the beginning; but now it shall be more comprehensive, indicating a very large progeny. By the exposition given of this promise in the New Testament, (Rem. iv. 16, 17.) we are directed to understand it, not only of those who sprang from Abram's body, though these were many nations; but also of all that should be *of the* FAITH *of Abraham*. It went to make him the father of the Church of God in all future ages; or, as the apostle calls him, "the heir of the world." In this view he is the father of many, even of *a multitude of nations*. For all that the Christian world enjoys, or ever will enjoy, it is indebted to Ahraham and his seed. A high honor this, to be the father of the faithful, the stock from whence the Messiah should spring, and on which the church of God should grow. It was this honor that Esau despised, when he sold his birthright; and here lay the *profaneness* of that act, which involved a contempt of the most sacred of all objects—the Messiah, and his everlasting kingdom!

Ver. 7—14. The covenant with Abraham, as has been observed already, was not confined to his own person, but extended to his posterity after him in their generations. To ascertain the meaning of this promise, we can proceed on no ground more certain than fact. It is fact that God in succeeding ages took the seed of Abraham to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all other nations; not only giving them "the land of Canaan for a possession," but himself to be *their* God, *king*, or *temporal* governor. Nor was this all: it was among them that he set up his *spiritual* kingdom; giving them his lively oracles, sending to them his prophets, and establishing among them his holy worship: which great advantages were, for many ages, in a manner confined to them: and, what was still more the great body of those who were eternally saved, previously to the coming of Christ, were saved from among them. These things, taken together, were an immensely greater favor than if they had all been, literally, made kings and priests. Such, then, being the *facts*, it is natural to suppose that such was the meaning of the promise.

[As an Antipædobaptist, I see no necessity for denying that spiritual blessings were promised, *in this general way*, to the natural seed of Abraham; nor can it, I think, be fairly denied. The Lord engaged to do that which he actually did; namely, to take out of them, rather than other nations, a people for himself. This, I suppose, is the *seed* promised to Abraham, to which the apostle refers, when he says, "They who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are accounted for the SEED." Rom. ix. 8. By the children of promise" he did not mean the elect in general, composed of Jews and Gentiles, but the elect from among the Jews. Hence, he reckons himself "an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham and the tribe of Benjamin," as a living proof that "God had not cast away his people whom he foreknew."—Rom. xi. 1, 2.

But I perceive not how it follows hence that God has promised to take a people from among the natural descendants of believers, in distinction from others. What was promised to Abraham, was neither promised nor fulfilled to every good man. Of the posterity of his kinsman, Lot, nothing good is recorded. It is true, the labors of those parents who bring up their children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" are ordinarily blessed to the conversion of some of them: and the same may be said of the labors of faithful ministers, wherever providence stations them. But, as it does not follow in the one case, that the graceless inhabitants are more in covenant with God than those of other places, neither does it follow in the other that the graceless offspring of believers are more in covenant with God than those of unbelievers. "New-Testament saints have nothing more to do with the Abrahamic covenant than the Old-Testament believers who lived prior to Abraham.

I am aware that the words of the apostle, in Gal. iii. 14. "The blessing of Abraham is come on the Gentiles, through Jesus Christ," are alleged in proof of the contrary. But the meaning of that passage, I conceive, is not that through Jesus Christ every believer becomes an Abraham, a *father* of the faithful; but that he is reckoned among his *children;* not a *stock* on which the future church should grow; but a *branch* partaking of the root and fatness of the olive-tree. So, at least, the context appears to explain it: "They which are of faith, are the children of faithful Abraham."—ver. 7.

But if it were granted that the blessing of Abraham is so come on the believing

Gentiles as not only to render them blessed as his spiritual children, but to insure a people for God from among their natural posterity rather than from those of others, yet it is not *as* their natural posterity that they are individually entitled to any one spiritual blessing; for this is more than was true of the natural seed of Abraham. Nor do I see how it follows hence that we are warranted to baptize them in their infancy. Abraham, it is true, was commanded to circumcise his male children; and if we had been commanded to baptize our males, or females, or both, or any example of the kind had been left in the New Testament, we should be as much obliged to comply in the one case as he was in the other. But we do not think ourselves warranted to reason from circumcision to baptism; from the circumcision of males to the baptism of males and females; and from the children of a nation (the greater part of whom were unbelievers,) and of "servants born in the house, or bought with money," to the baptism of the children of believers. In short, we do not think ourselves warranted, in matters of positive institution, to found our practice on analogies, whether real or supposed; and still less on one so circuitous, dissonant, and uncertain as that in question. Our duty, we conceive, is, in such cases to follow the precepts and examples of the dispensation under which we live.]

As a sign or token of this solemn covenant with Abraham and his posterity, "every man-child among them" was required to be "circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin;" and not only their own children, but those of their "servants born in their house, or bought with their money." This ordinance was the mark by which they were distinguished as a people in covenant with Jehovah, and which bound them by a special obligation to obey him. Like almost all other positive institutions, it was also prefigurative of mental purity, or "putting off the body of the sins of the flesh." A neglect of it subjected the party to a being cut off from his people, as having broken God's covenant.

Ver. 15, 16. As Abram's name had been changed to Abraham, a similar honor is confered on Sarai, who in future is to be called *Sarah*. The difference of these names is much the same as those of her husband, and corresponds with what had been promised them both on this occasion. The former meant, *My princess*, and was expressive of *high* honor in her own family; but the latter, *A princess*, and denoted more *extensive* honor, as it is here expressed, "A mother of nations." This honor coferred on Sarai would correct an important error into which both she and her husband had fallen; imagining that all hope was at an end of a child being born of her, and therefore that, if the promise were fulfilled, it must be in Ishmael. But not only must Abram become Abraham, "the father of many nations;" but Sarai, Sarah, "the mother of nations;" and this not by her handmaid, as she had vainly imagined; but God would give him a son also "of her," and kings of people should be "of her."

Ver. 17, 18. The effect of this unexpected promise on Abraham was that he "fell on his face and laughed." The term does not here indicate lightness, as we comonly use it; but joy, mingled with wonder and astonishment. "Shall a child be born," saith he, "unto him that is a hundred years old? And Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?" In another case (chap. xviii. 12, 13), laughter implied a mixture of doubting; but not in this.—Abraham believed God, and was overcome with joyful surprise. But a doubt immediately occurs, which strikes a damp upon his pleasure: The promise of another son destroys all my expectations with respect to him who is already given! Perhaps he must die to make room for the other; or, if not, he may be another Cain, who went out from the presence of the Lord. To what drawbacks are our best enjoyments subject in this world; and, in many cases, owing to our going before the Lord in our hopes and schemes of happiness! When his plan comes to be put in execution, it interferes with ours, and there can be no doubt, in such a case, which must give place. If Abraham had waited God's time for the fulfilment of the promise, it would not have been accompanied with such an alloy: but having failed in this, after all his longing desires after it, it becomes in a manner unwelcome to him! What can he do or say in so delicate a situation? Grace would say, Accept the divine promise with thankfulness. But nature struggles: the bowels of the father are troubled for Ishmael. In this state of mind he presumes to offer up a petition to heaven: "Oh that Ishmael might live before thee!" Judging of the import of this petition by the answer, it would seem to mean, either that God would condescend to withdraw his promise of another son, and let Ishmael be the person; or, if that could not be, that his life might be spared, and himself and his posterity be among the people of God, sharing the blessing, or being *heir with him* who should be born of Sarah. To *live*, and to live *before God*, according to the usual acceptation of the phrase, could not, I think, mean less than one or the oth-

er of these things. It was very lawful for him to desire the temporal and spiritual welfare of his son, and of his posterity after him, in submission to the will of God: but, in a case wherein natural affection appeared to clash with God's revealed designs, he must have felt himself in a painful situation: and the recollection that the whole was owing to his own and Sarah's unbelief, would add to his regret.

Ver. 19—27. As Abraham's petition seemed to contain an implied wish that it would please God to withdraw his promise of another son, the answer to it contains an implied but peremptory denial, with a tacit reflection on him for having taken Hagar to be his wife: "And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son *indeed*." As if he should say, She is thy wife, and ought to have been thy only wife, and verily it shall be in a son born of her that the promise shall be fulfilled.—It is also intimated to him that this should be no grief to him; but that he should call his name Isaac, that is, *laughter* or *gladness*, on account of the joy his birth should occasion. And as Abraham's petition seemed to plead that Ishmael and his posterity might at least be *heir with* Isaac, so as to be ranked among God's covenant people, this also by implication is denied him. "I will establish my covenant *with him* for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him." Ishmael, while he is in Abraham's family, shall be considered as a branch of it, and and as such be circumcised; but the covenant of peculiarity should not be established with him and his descendants, but with Isaac exclusivly. As many, however, who were included in this covenant had no share in eternal life, so many who were excluded from it might, notwithstanding, escape eternal death. The door of mercy was always open to every one that believed. In every nation, and in every age, he that feared God and wrought righteousness, was accepted of him.

But shall no part of this petition be granted? Yes. "As for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly: twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation . . . . but my covenant will I establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear unto thee." And having, said thus much, the very time of his birth is now particularly named: it shall be "at this set time in the next year." Here ended the communications of this kind between the Lord and his servant Abraham; and it appears that from this time he was satisfied. We hear nothing more like an objection to the divine will, nor any wish to have things otherwise than they were. On the contrary, we find him immediately engaged in an implicit obedience to the command of circumcision. His conduct on this occasion furnishes a bright example to all succeeding ages of the manner in which divine ordinances should be complied with. There are three things in particular, in the obedience of Abraham, worthy of notice. 1. It was *prompt*. "In the self-same day that God had spoken unto him" the command was put in execution. This was "making haste, and delaying not to keep his commandments." To treat the divine precepts as matters of small importance, or to put off what is manifestly our duty to another time, is to trifle with supreme authority. So did not Abraham. 2. It was *punctilious*. The correspondence between the command of God and the obedience of his servant is minutely exact. The words of the former are,—"*Thou* shalt keep my covenant, *and thy seed* after thee . . . . and *he that is born in thy house, or bought with money* of any stranger, which is not of thy seed." With this agrees the account of the latter: "In the self-same day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son; and all the men of his house, born in the house and bought with money of the stranger, were circumcised with him." A rigid regard to the revealed will of God enters deeply into true religion: that spirit which dispenses with it, though it may pass under the specious name of liberality, is anti-christian. 3. It was yielded in *old age*, when many would have pleaded off from engaging in any thing new, or different from what they had before received; and when, as some think, it would be a further trial to his faith as to the fulfilment of the promise. "Ninety and nine years old was Abraham when he was circumcised." It is one of the temptations of old age to be tenacious of what we have believed and practised from our youth; to shut our eyes and ears against every thing that may prove it to have been erroneous or defective, and to find excuses for being exempted from hard and dangerous duties. But Abraham to the last was ready to receive farther instruction, and to do as he was commanded, leaving consequences with God. This shows that the admonition to "walk before him and be perfect," had not been given him in vain.

DISCOURSE XXVI.

ABRAHAM ENTERTAINING ANGELS, AND INTERCEDING FOR SODOM.

Gen. xviii.

VER. 1—3. The time drawing nigh that the promise should be fulfilled, God's appearances to Abraham are frequently repeated. That which is here recorded seems to have followed the last at a very little distance. Sitting one day in a kind of porch, at his tent door, which screened him from the heat of the sun, "he lift up his eyes, and lo, three men" stood at a little distance from him. To him they appeared to be three strangers on a journey, and as such he treated them. His conduct on this occasion is held up in the epistle to the Hebrews as an example of *hospitality;* and an admirable example it affords. His generosity on this occasion is not more conspicuous than the amiable manner in which it was expressed. The instant he saw them, he rises up, as by a kind of instinctive courtesy, to bid them welcome to his tent, and that in the most respectful manner. Though an old man, and they perfect strangers to him, he no sooner saw them than he "ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground;" and observing one of them, as it should seem, presenting himself to him before the other, he said to him, "My lord, if now I have found favor in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant."

Ver. 4, 5. And whereas they were supposed to be weary, and overcome with the heat, he persuades them to wash their feet, and sit down under the shade of the spreading oak near his tent, and take a little refreshment, though it were but a morsel of bread, to comfort their hearts; after which they might go forward on their journey. Something may be said of the customs of those times and countries, and of there being but few, if any inns for the accommodation of strangers; but it certainly affords a charming specimen of patriarchal urbanity, and an example of the manner in which kindness and hospitality should be shown. To impart relief in an ungracious and churlish manner destroys the value of it. We see also in this conduct the genuine fruits of true religion. That which in worldly men is mere complaisance, dictated often by ambition, in Abraham was kindness, goodness, sympathy, and humbleness of mind. It is to the honor of religion that it produces those amiable dispositions which the worst of men are constrained, for their own reputation, to imitate. If such dispositions and such behavior were universal, the world would be a paradise.

Ver. 6—8. The supposed strangers having consented to accept the invitation, the good old man, as full of pleasure as if he had found a prize, resolves to entertain them with something better than "a morsel of bread," though he had modestly used that language. Hastening to Sarah, he desires her to get three measures of fine meal, and bake cakes upon the hearth; while he, old as he was, runs to the herd, and fetches a calf, tender and good, and gives it to one of his young men, with orders to kill and dress it immediately. And now the table being spread beneath the cooling shade of the oak, the veal, with butter and milk to render it more palatable, is placed upon it, and Abraham himself waits on his guests. Such was the style of patriarchal simplicity and hospitality. As yet Abraham does not appear to have suspected what kind of guests he was entertaining. He might probably be struck from the first with their mien and appearance, which seem to have excited his highest respect; yet he considered them merely as strangers, and as such entertained them. It was thus that he "entertained angels unawares."

Ver. 9, 10. But while they sat at dinner under the tree, inquiry was made after Sarah, his wife. Abraham answered, "Behold, she is in the tent." This inquiry must excite some surprise; for how should these strangers know the name of Abraham's wife, and her new name too; and why should they inquire after her? But, if the inquiry must strike Abraham with surprise, what followed must have a still greater effect. He who was the first in train on their arrival, and whom he had addressed in terms of the highest respect, now adds, "I will certainly return unto thee, according to the time of life, and lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son." This language must remind him of the promise which he had so lately received, and convince him that the speaker was no other than Jehovah, under the appearance of a man. In the progress of the Old Testament history, we often read of similar appearances; particularly to Jacob at Peniel, to Moses at the bush, and to Joshua by Jericho. The divine personage who in this manner appeared to men, must surely have been no other than the Son of God, who thus occasionally assumed the form of that nature which it was his intention, in the fulness of time, actually to take upon him. It was thus that, "being in the form of God, he thought it not robbery to be equal with God;" that is, he spake and acted all along *as God*, and did not consider himself in so doing as arrogating any thing which did not properly belong to him.

Ver. 11—15. Sarah having overheard

what was said concerning her, and knowing that according to the ordinary course of things she was too old to have a son, laughed within herself at the saying. She supposed, however, that as it was to herself the whole was unknown: but it was not. The same word is used as was before used of Abraham, but it was not the same thing. His laughter was that of joy and surprise: hers had in it a mixture of unbelief, which called forth the reproof of Jehovah. "Jehovah," the same personage who is elsewhere called an angel and a man, "said unto Abraham," in the hearing of his wife, "Wherefore did Sarah laugh?" And to detect the sinfulness of this laughter, he points out the principle of it—it was saying, "Shall I of a surety bear a child, who am old?" which principle he silences by asking, "Is any thing too hard for Jehovah?" And then he solemnly repeats the promise, as that which ought to suffice: "At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son." This language, while it proved that he who uttered it was a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, covered Sarah's face with confusion. In her fright she denies having laughed; but the denial was in vain. He who knew all things replied, "Nay, but thou didst laugh." We may imagine that what merely passes in our own minds has in a manner no existence, and may almost persuade ourselves to think we are innocent: but in the presence of God all such subterfuges are no better than the fig-leaves of our first parents. When he judgeth, he will overcome.

Ver. 16—19. *The men*, as they are called, according to their appearance, now take leave of the tent, and go on their way towards Sodom. Abraham, loth to part with them, went in company, as if to bring them on their way. While they were walking together, Jehovah, in the form of a man, said unto the other two (who appear to have been created angels,) "Shall I hide from Abraham the thing which I do?" Two reasons are assigned for the contrary. First: the importance of his character. He was not only the friend of God, but the father of "a great nation," in which God would have a special interest, and through which *all other nations should be blessed.* Let him be in the secret. Secondly: The good use he would make of it. Being previously disclosed to him, he would be the more deeply impressed by it: and, according to his tried and approved conduct as the head of a family, would be concerned to impart it as a warning to his posterity in all future ages. As the wicked extract ill from good, so the righteous will extract good from ill. Sodom's destruction shall turn to Abraham's salvation: the monument of just vengeance against their crimes shall be of perpetual use to him and his posterity, and contribute even to the *bringing of that good upon them which the Lord had spoken concerning them.* The special approbation with which God here speaks of family-religion stamps a divine authority upon it, and an infamy upon that religion, or rather irreligion, which dispenses with it.

Ver. 20, 21. Jehovah, having resolved to communicate his design to Abraham, proceeds to inform him as follows: "Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous, I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it which is come unto me; and, if not, I will know." This language, though spoken after the manner of men, contains much serious and important instruction. It teaches us that the most abandoned people are still the subjects of divine government, and must, sooner or later, give an account; that impiety, sensuality, and injustice, are followed with a *cry* for retribution; that this cry is often disregarded by earthly tribunals; that, where it is so, the prayers of the faithful, the groans of the oppressed, and the blood of the slain, constitute a cry which ascendeth to heaven, and entereth into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth; and, finally, that in executing judgment, though God will regard these cries, especially where they wax greater and greater, as this is afterwards said to have done; yet as they may be partial and erroneous, he will not proceed by them as a rule, but will avail himself of his own omniscience, that the worst of characters may have no cause to complain of injustice.

Ver. 22—33. It is natural to suppose that the mind of Abraham must be forcibly impressed with this intimation. He would feel for his poor ungodly neighbors; but especially for Lot, and other righteous men whom he might hope would be found among them. At this juncture *the men*, that is, two out of the three (chap. xix. 1,) went towards Sodom: but the third, who is called *Jehovah*, continued to converse with Abraham. The patriarch standing before him, and being now aware that he was in the presence of the Most High, addressed him in the language of prayer, or intercession. A remarkable intercession it is. We remark, 1. Abraham makes a good use of his previous knowledge. Being made acquainted with the evil coming upon them, he stands in the gap, and labors all he can to avert it. They knew nothing; and, if they had, no cries, except the shrieks of desperation, would have been heard from them. It is good to have such a neighbor

as Abraham; and still better to have an Intercessor before the throne who is always heard. The conduct of the patriarch furnishes an example to all who have an interest at the throne of grace, to make use of it on behalf of their poor ungodly countrymen and neighbors. 2. He does not plead that the wicked may be spared for their own sake, or because it would be too severe a proceeding to destroy them; but *for the sake of the righteous who might be found among them.* Had either of the other pleas been advanced, it had been siding with sinners against God, which Abraham would never do. Wickedness shuts the mouth of intercession; or, if any should presume to speak, it would be of no account. Though Noah, Daniel, and Job, should plead for the ungodly, they would not be heard. Righteousness only will bear to be made a plea before God. But how then, it may be asked, did Christ make intercession for *transgressors?* Not by arraigning the divine law, nor by alleging aught in extenuation of human guilt; but by pleading his own obedience unto death. 3. He charitably hopes the best with respect to the number of righteous characters even in Sodom. At the outset of his intercession, he certainly considered it as a possible case, at least, that there might be found in that wicked place, fifty righteous: and though in this instance, he was sadly mistaken, yet we may hope hence that in those times there were many more righteous people in the world than those which are recorded in the Scripture. The Scriptures do not profess to be a book of life, containing the names of all the faithful; but intimate, on the contrary, that God *reserves* to himself a people, who are but little known even by his own servants. 4. God was willing to spare the worst of cities for the sake of a few righteous characters. This truth is as humiliating to the haughty enemies of religion, as it is encouraging to his friends; and furnishes an important lesson to civil governments, to beware of undervaluing, and still more of persecuting and banishing, men whose concern is to live soberly, righteously, and godly in the world. (Chap. vi. 11.) Except the Lord of hosts had left *us* a remnant of such characters, we might, ere now, have been as Sodom, and made like unto Gomorrah! If ten righteous men had been found in Sodom, it had been spared for their sakes: but, alas, there is no such number! God called Abraham to Haran, and, when he left that place, mention is made, not only of "the substance which he had gathered," but of "the souls which he had gotten." But Lot, who went to Sodom of his own accord, though he also gathered substance, yet seems not, by his residence in the place, to have won a single soul to the worship of the true God.

DISCOURSE XXVII.

THE DESTRUCTION OF SODOM AND GOMORRAH.

Genesis xix.

Ver. 1, 2. The two angels who left Abraham communing with Jehovah, went on their way till they came to Sodom. Arriving at the city in the evening, the first person whom they saw appears to have been Lot, who was then sitting alone, it should seem, at the gate of the city. They had found Abraham also sitting alone, but it was at his own tent door. Lot, whose house was in the city, had probably no place where he could be out of the hearing of those whose conversation vexed his righteous soul: he therefore took a walk in the evening, and sat down without the city gate, where he might spend an hour in retirement. Seeing two strangers coming up to him, he behaved in much the same courteous and hospitable manner as Abraham had done. Bowing himself with his face toward the ground, he said, "Behold now, my lords; turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways." This was lovely; and the contrast between this and the conduct of his neighbors shows, what was suggested in the former chapter, the genuine fruits of true religion. What is said to be the customary hospitality of the age and country was far from being practised by the other inhabitants of Sodom. But, though Lot had given them so kind an invitation, they seem determined not to accept of it—"Nay," said they, "but we will abide in the street all night." This might be either for the purpose of being eye-witnesses of the conduct of the citizens, or to express their abhorrence of the general character of the city; as when the prophet of Judah was sent to Bethel, he was forbidden either "to eat bread or to drink water in that place." 1 Kings xiii. 8—17.

Ver. 3. After being *greatly pressed*, however, by Lot, they yielded to his importunity, and entered into his house; where he made them a feast, as Abraham had done, and they did eat.

Ver. 4, 5. But, while things were going on well with respect to Lot, the baseness of his neighbors soon betrayed itself. A little before bed-time they beset the house; not for the purpose of robbing, or insulting them in any of the ordinary ways of brutal out-

rage—this had been bad enough, especially to strangers—but to perpetrate a species of crime too shocking and detestable to be named; a species of crime which indeed has no name given it in the Scriptures but what is borrowed from this infamous place.

Ver. 6—9. The conduct of Lot, in going out and expostulating with them, was in several respects praise worthy. His shutting the door after him expressed how delicately he felt for his guests, though at present he does not appear to have considered them in any other light than that of strangers. It was saying in effect, Let not their ears be offended with what passes abroad; whatever is scurrilous, obscene, or abusive, let me hear it, but not them.—His gentle and respectful manner of treating this worst of mobs, is also worthy of notice. He could not respect them on the score of character; but he would try and do so, as being still his fellow-creatures and near neighbors. As such he calls them *brethren*, no doubt hoping, by such conciliating language, to dissuade them from their wicked purpose. But when, to turn off their attention from his guests, he proposes the bringing out of his daughters to them, he appears to have gone too far. It is not for us to go into a less evil, in the hope of preventing a greater; but rather consent to no evil. It might be owing to the perturbation of his mind; but probably, if he had not lived in Sodom till his mind was almost familiarized to obscenity, he would not have made such a proposal. Nor had it any good effect. He only got himself more abused for it; and even his gentle remonstrance was perversely construed into obtrusive forwardness, and setting himself up for a judge, who was merely a *sojourner* among them. Persuasion has no force with men who are under the dominion of their lusts. So now their resentment burns against him, and they will be revenged on him. They will not be contented now with having the men brought out, but will go unto them, and break the door open, to effect their purpose.

Ver. 10, 11. Such an attempt, and such a perseverance in it, must have been proof sufficient to the heavenly messengers that the cry of Sodom had not exceeded the truth. Putting forth their hands, therefore, they pulled Lot into the house to them, shut to the door, and smote the people without with blindness. The power and indignation displayed in these acts would convince him that they were no common strangers; and, one would have thought, might have struck them with awe and caused them to desist from their horrid purpose: but they are infatuated. Though supernaturally smitten with blindness, they must still "weary themselves to find the door." Such daring presumption in the face of heaven, must have filled up the measure of their crimes, and rendered them ripe for destruction.

Ver. 12, 13. Things are now hastening to their awful crisis: but mark the mercy of divine proceedings. Ten righteous men would have saved the city; but there seems to have been only one. Well, not only shall that one escape, but all that belonged to him shall be delivered for his sake; or, if otherwise, it shall be their own fault. Sons-in-law, sons, daughters, or whatever he had, are directed to be brought out of this place; for, said they, as it were opening their commission and reading it to Lot, "We will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of Jehovah, and Jehovah hath sent us to destroy it."

Ver. 14. Giving full credit to the divine threatening, and being deeply impressed with it, Lot went forth to warn his sons-in-law, who had married his daughters. We do not read till now that Lot had a family. It looks as if he had taken his wife from Sodom, soon after he had parted from Abraham; and, as he must have been there about twenty years, he had daughters, some of whom were married, and two remained with him single. No mention is made of his married daughters being alive at this time; but by the manner in which the others are spoken of, in verse 15, "Thy two daughters which are HERE," it is probable *they* were *elsewhere;* viz. along with their husbands, and perished with them in the overthrow. The warning given to his sons-in-law was abrupt and pointed; "Up, get ye out of this place; for Jehovah will destroy this city! But he seemed to them as one that mocked," or who was in jest. He believed, and therefore spake: but they disbelieved, and therefore made light of it. A striking example this of the ordinary effect of truth upon the minds of unbelievers.

Ver. 15, 16. All this had taken place in one night. Early in the morning Lot is hastened away from the devoted spot. And as his sons-in-law. and it seems their wives with them, would not hear, he is commanded to leave them; and, without farther delay, to take his wife, and his two daughters who were with him, lest he should be consumed in the overthrow of the city. The threatening part of this language would probably not have been addressed to him, had he not discovered a reluctance to depart. I hope it was not his worldly substance that clave to him, much less any attachment to that wicked city; but rather that it was his daughters and their husbands, who could not be persuaded to accompany him, that occasioned this strong conflict. It was on this account, I suppose, that he is said to have *lingered;* and his deliverers were at

last obliged to lay hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters, and (Jehovah being merciful unto him) by force, in a manner, to set them without the city. Such has been the struggle in many minds, when called to leave all and flee from the wrath to come; and such the mercy of God towards them.

Ver. 17. Having been so far saved, almost in spite of himself, he is now solemnly charged to "escape for his life," not so much as to look behind him, nor stay in all the plain; but to "escape to the mountain," lest he should be "consumed.' This was continuing to be mercifully severe; and such are our Lord's commands which require us to deny self, take up the cross, and follow him. It was better for Lot to be thus warned off the ground, than to be consumed upon it; and we had better cut off a right hand, or pluck out a right eye, than be cast into hell.

Ver. 18—22. Lot was certainly a righteous man; but in times of trial his graces do not appear to the best advantage. He is directed to flee to the mountain, and he had better have been there all his days than where he was; but he pleads hard to live in a city, and hopes he may be excused in this desire, seeing it was "a little one." Had he properly confided in God, he would have gone to the mountain without hesitation: but his faith is weak, and his fears prevail, that if he go thither "some evil will take him, and he shall die." This, his imbecility, however, is graciously passed over; his request is granted, and the city spared for his sake. Nor was this all. The angel kindly hastens his escape to this city formerly called Bela, but henceforward Zoar, that is, *little;* for that he could do nothing till he should have come thither. All this was merciful, very merciful; and proves not only that the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, but also that their blood is precious in his sight.

Ver. 23—25. By the time that Lot entered into Zoar, the sun had risen upon the earth. It promised perhaps to be a fine day; and the inhabitants of Sodom, after their night's revel, would be going forth to do as at other times. But lo! on a sudden, floods of fire and brimstone from the Lord out of heaven, descend upon this and the neighboring city of Gomorrah, utterly consuming them, and all their inhabitants! Some have supposed this tremendous judgment to have been effected by a volcanic eruption in the neighborhood, the lava of which, first ascending high into the atmosphere, and then descending upon the devoted cities, destroyed them. If so it were, God's hand was in it, directing and timing its operations, no less than if it were accomplished without the interference of any second cause.

Ver. 26. The Lord delivered just Lot, and his whole family, as we have seen: had much mercy shown them for his sake. But favor may be shown to the wicked, yet will they not learn righteousness.—Some refused to go with him, and those that did go proved to him a grief and a snare. His wife is said to have "looked back from behind him" during their journey, and was instantly struck dead, and remained upon the spot a petrified monument of divine vengeance. It may be thought a hard fate for a mere glance of the eye; but that glance, no doubt, was expressive of unbelief, and a lingering desire to return. Probably she was of much the same mind as her sons-in-law, and attributed the whole to the resentment of the strangers, whom her husband was weak enough to believe. It is certain that her example is held up by our Lord as a warning against "turning back," which intimates that such was the meaning of her look.

Ver. 27—29. Abraham having made intercession, though the issue of it gave him but little hope of success, yet is anxious to see what will be the end of these things. Unable, it seems, to rest in his bed, he arose early the next morning, and went to the place where he had stood before the Lord. From having a view of the plain, he beheld, and lo the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace. He had not mentioned Lot by name, in his intercession, though doubtless it had respect to him; and the Lord so far hearkened to his prayer as to deliver that good man in answer to it. Lot could not pray for himself, for he was not aware of his danger till it in a manner came upon him. What a mercy it is to have an Intercessor who knows all the evils which are coming upon us, and prays for us that our strength fail not! But to return to Lot—

Ver. 30. On leaving Sodom he was very earnest to have Zoar granted him for a refuge, and to be excused from going to dwell in the mountain: yet now, all on a sudden, he went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain; and that for the very reason which he had given for a contrary choice. Then he feared some evil would take him if he went to the mountain;—now he fears to dwell in Zoar." It is well to know that the way of man is not in himself, and that it is not in man to direct his steps. Our wisdom is to refer all to God, and to follow wherever his word and providence lead the way. But why did not Lot return to Abraham? There was no occasion now for strife about their herds; for he had lost all and but just escaped with his life. Whatever was the reason, he

does not appear to have made a good choice. Had he gone to the mountain when directed, he might have hoped for preserving mercy: but going of his own accord, and from a motive of sinful distrust, evil in reality overtakes him. His daughters, who seem to have contracted such habits in Sodom as would prepare them for any thing, however unnatural, draw him into intemperance and incest, and thus cover old age with infamy. The offspring of this illicit intercourse were the fathers of two great but heathen nations; viz. the Moabites and the children of Ammon.

The dishonorable end of this good man shows that we are never out of danger while we are upon earth. He whose righteous soul was grieved with the filthy conversation of the wicked while in a city is drawn into the same kind of evils himself when dwelling in a cave! His whole history also from the time of his leaving Abraham, furnishes an affecting lesson to the heads of families in the choice of habitations for themselves or their children. If worldly accommodations be preferred to religious advantages, we have nothing good to expect, but every thing evil. We may, or we may not, lose our substance as he did; but, what is of far greater consequence, our families may be expected to become mere heathens, and our own minds be contaminated with the examples which are continually before our eyes. Such was the harvest which Lot reaped from his well-watered plain; and such are the fruits very commonly seen in the experience of those that follow his example!

DISCOURSE XXVIII.

ABRAHAM AND ABIMELECH.

Gen. xx.

Ver. 1. After the affecting story of Lot we return to Abraham. When he and his kinsman parted he pitched his tent in the plains of Mamre, and appears to have continued there nearly twenty years. At length he removes again, journeying southward, and taking up his residence for a time at Gerar, which was then a royal city of the Philistines.

Ver. 2. And here we find him a second time saying of Sarah his wife, "She is my sister." His sin in so speaking seems to be much greater than it was before. For, 1. He had narrowly escaped the first time. If God had not remarkably interposed in his favor, there is no saying what would have been the consequence. The repetition of the same fault looked like presuming upon providence. 2. Sarah was now pregnant, and that of a son of promise: he might therefore surely have trusted God to preserve their lives in the straight-forward path of duty, instead of having recourse to his own crooked policy. But he did not. There are exceptions in every human character, and often in the very thing wherein they in general excel. The consequence was, Abimelech, king of Gerar, sent and took her, probably by force, to be one of his wives. We should have thought that the age of Sarah might have exempted both her and her husband from this temptation: but human life was then much longer than it is now; and she was a beautiful woman, and we may suppose carried her years better than many. Be that as it may, she is involved in a difficulty from which she cannot get clear, nor can Abraham tell how to deliver her. It has been observed that, when wicked men deviate from truth, they will very commonly get through with it; but, if a good man think to do so, he will as commonly find himself mistaken. If once he leave the path of rectitude he is entangled, and presently betrays himself. The crooked devices of the flesh are things in which he is not sufficiently an adept, and conscience will often prevent his going through with them. God also will generally so order things that he shall be detected, and put to shame at an early stage, and that in mercy to his soul; while sinners are left to go on in their evil courses with success.

Ver. 3—7. Man's wisdom leads him into a pit, and God's wisdom must draw him out. God has access to all men's minds, and can impress them by a dream, an affliction, or in any way he thinks proper. He did thus by Abimelech. Dreams, in general, are mere vanity, the excursions of imagination, unaccompanied with reason; yet these are under the control of God, and have, in many instances, been the medium of impressing things of great importance on the mind. Abimelech dreamed that he heard the voice of the Almighty, saying unto him, "Behold, thou art a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken, for she is a man's wife." Whether Abimelech was an idolater I know not: but this I know, that if, in countries called Christian, every adulterer were "a dead man," many would be numbered with the dead who now glory in their shame. And, though human laws may wink at this crime, it is no less heinous in the sight of God than when it is punished with death. Abimelech, conscious that he had not come near the woman, answered in his dream, "Lord, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation? Said he not unto me, She is my sister? And she, even she herself, said, He is my brother. In the

integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this." The first sentence in this answer appears to contain a reference to the recent and awful event of Sodom's overthrow, which must have greatly impressed the surrounding country.. It is as if he had said, I am aware that thou hast slain a nation notorious for its filthy and unnatural crimes; but we are not such a nation; and in the present case all that has been done was in perfect ignorance. Surely thou wilt not slay the innocent.—The answer of God admits his plea of ignorance, and suggests that he was not charged with having yet sinned, but threatened with death in case he persisted, now that he was informed of the truth. It is intimated, however, that if he had come near her, he would, in so doing, having sinned against *God*, whether he had sinned against Abraham or not; and this, perhaps, owing to her being in a state of pregnancy, of which in that case, he could not have been ignorant. But God had mercifully withheld him from thus sinning against him, for which it became him to be thankful, and without delay to "restore the man his wife." It was also added that the man was "a prophet," or one who had special intercourse with heaven; and who, if he restored his wife, would pray to God for him, and he should live; but, if he withheld her, he should surely die, and all that belonged to him.

We see in this account, 1. That absolute ignorance excuses from guilt; but this does not prove that all ignorance does so, or that it is in itself excusable. Where the powers and means of knowledge are possessed, and ignorance arises from neglecting to make use of them, or from aversion to the truth, it is so far from excusing that it is in itself sinful. 2. That, great as the wickedness of men is upon the face of the earth, it would be much greater, were it not that God by his providence, in innumerable instances, *withholds* them from it. The conduct of intelligent beings is influenced by motives; and all motives which are presented to the mind are subject to his disposal. Hence we may feel the propriety of that petition, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

Ver. 8. Abimelech, awakening, is deeply impressed with his dream. He rises early, calls together the principal people about him, and imparts particulars to them at the rehearsal of which they are *sore afraid.* Some afflictions had already been laid upon them, of which they seem to have been aware (ver. 18;) and considering the late tremendous judgments of God upon Sodom, with the terrific dream of the king, just rehearsed, it is no wonder they should be seized with fear.

Ver. 9, 10. After speaking to his servants, he next sent for Abraham to converse the matter over. His address to the patriarch is pointed, but temperate: "What hast thou done unto us? And (in) what have I offended thee, that thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? Thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done.—What sawest thou, that thou hast done this thing?" We are grieved to find Abraham in such a situation. How honorable did he appear before the king of Sodom, and the king of Salem; but how dishonorable before the king of Gerar! Sin is the reproach of any people, and the greater and better the man, the greater is the reproach.

Ver. 11—13. But let us hear his apology. "And Abraham said, because I thought, Surely the fear of God is not in this place, and they will slay me for my wife's sake. And yet indeed, she is my sister! she is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife. And it came to pass, when God caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said unto her, This is thy kindness which thou shalt show unto me: at every place whither we shall come, say of me, He is my brother." According to his account, to be sure, there was nothing against Abimelech in particular; and this might serve to appease him: but with respect to God, or his "doing deeds that ought not to be done," what he had said, if not a lie, was yet an *equivocation.* Many things of this sort pass among men; but they will not bear a strict scrutiny. If our words, though in some sense true, yet are designed to convey what is not true, as was the case in this instance, we are guilty of doing what ought not to be done.

Ver. 14, 15. Abimelech, satisfied with this answer, so far as respected himself restored Sarah to her husband, and that with a trespass-offering, like that which was afterwards presented by his countrymen with the ark (1 Sam. vi. 3;) adding, with great courteousness, "Behold, my land is before thee: dwell where it pleaseth thee." For he saw that the Lord was with him.

Ver. 16—18. He did not part with Sarah, however, without giving her a word of reproof. In calling Abraham her *brother*, he made use of her own language in a sarcastic way; and tells her that her husband should be to her as a veil, that she should look on none else, and none else should look on her. Some have rendered the words, "It," that is, the silver, "shall be to thee a covering for the eyes, unto all that are with thee, and to all other." As if he had given it to buy her a veil, which might prevent all such mistakes in future. Take this (q. d.,) and never go without a

veil again, nor any of your married servants. "So she was reproved."

The issue was, Abraham prayed, and the Lord answered him, and healed the family of Abimelech. He would feel a motive for prayer, in this case, which he did not when interceding for Sodom: for of this evil he himself had been the cause.

DISCOURSE XXIX.

THE BIRTH OF ISAAC, &c.

Gen. xxi.

VER. 1. Abraham, still sojourning in the land of the Philistines, at length sees the promise fulfilled. It is noted with some degree of emphasis, as forming a special epoch in his life, that "the Lord visited Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did unto Sarah as he had spoken." Such a kind of language is used of his posterity being put in possession of the promised land: "The Lord gave them rest round about, according to all that he sware unto their fathers—there failed not aught of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel: all came to pass." And such will be our language sooner or later concerning all the good things promised to the church, or to us as individuals.

Ver. 2. Two things are particularly noticed in the birth of this child: it was in Abraham's "old age," and "at the set time of which God had spoken to him." Both these circumstances showed the whole to be of God. That which comes to us in the ordinary course of things may *be* of God, but that which comes otherwise manifestly *appears* to be so. One great difference between this child and the son of Hagar consisted in this: the one was born "after the flesh;" that is, in the ordinary course of generation: but the other "after the Spirit;" that is, by extraordinary divine interposition, and in virtue of a special promise.—Gal. iv. 23, 29. Analogous to these were those Jews on the one hand who were merely descended from Abraham "according to the flesh;" and those on the other who were "not of the circumcision only, but also walked in the steps of the faith of their father Abraham."—Rom. iv. 12. The former were the children of the bond-woman, who were cast out: the latter of the free-woman, who, being "his people whom he foreknew," were not "cast away," but were counted for his seed.—Gal. iv. 28—31. Rom. ix. 7, 9; xi. 1, 2.

Ver. 3, 4. The name by which this extraordinary child should be called was *Isaac*, according to the previous direction of God. It signifies *laughter*, or *joy*, and corresponds with the gladness which accompanied his birth. Children are ordinarily "a heritage of the Lord." On account of the uncertainty of their future character, however, we have reason to rejoice with trembling: but in this case it was joy in a manner unmixed; for he was born under the promise of being "blessed, and made a blessing." But what a difference between the joy of Abraham at the birth of a child and that which is commonly seen among us! His was not that vain mirth, or noisy laughter, which unfits for obedience to God: on the contrary he circumcised his son when he was eight days old, not in conformity to custom, but "as God had commanded him."

Ver. 5—7. The sacred writers seldom deal in reflections themselves; but will often mention those of others. Moses, having recorded the fact that "Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born unto him," tells us of the joyful sayings of Sarah:—"God," saith she, "hath made me to laugh, so that all who hear will laugh with me."—"Who would have said unto Abraham that Sarah should have given children suck? For I have borne him a son in his old age!" Yes, God had made her to laugh, and that without any of her crooked measures: and not merely with a private, but a public joy; for "all that hear shall laugh with her."

Ver. 8. For a time nothing remarkable occurred: the child grew, and all went on pleasantly. When the time came for his being weaned, a great feast was made, in token of joy that he had passed the most delicate and dangerous stage of life.

Ver. 9. But the joy of that day was embittered. The son of Hagar, being stung with envy, cannot bear such an ado about this child of promise. So he turns it into ridicule, probably deriding the parents and the promise together; and all this in the sight of Sarah! Thus he that was born after the flesh began at an early stage to *persecute* him that was born after the spirit; and thus Sarah's crooked policy, in giving Hagar to Abraham, goes on to furnish them with new sources of sorrow. From what was said of Hagar in chap. xvi. we conceived hopes of her; but, whatever she was, her son appears at present to be a bitter enemy to God and his people.

Ver. 10—13. The consequence was, Sarah was set on both the mother and the son being banished from the family. Abraham had earnestly desired that Ishmael might *live before God;* but Sarah says, He shall not be heir with her son, with Isaac. This resolution on the part of Sarah might be the mere effect of temper; but, whatever

were her motives, the thing itself accorded with the design of God: though, therefore, it was grievous to Abraham, he is directed to comply with it. The Lord would indeed make a nation of Ishmael, because he was his seed: but in Isaac should his seed be called. We must not refuse to join in doing what God commands, however contrary it may be to our natural feelings, nor on account of the suspicious motives of some with whom we are called to act.

Ver. 14. Impressed with these principles, the father of the faithful without further delay rose early the next morning, probably before Sarah was stirring, and sent away both the mother and the son. His manner of doing it, however, was tender and kind. Giving Hagar a portion of bread, and a bottle of water, he committed them to Him who had in effect promised to watch over them. And now for a little while we take leave of Abraham's family, and observe the unhappy Hagar and her son wandering in the wilderness of Beersheba.

Ver. 15, 16. It was doubtless the design of Hagar, when she set off, to go to Egypt her native country; but having to travel through a desert land, where there was ordinarily no water, it was necessary she should be furnished with that article. Whether "the wilderness of Beersheba," as it was called at the time Moses wrote the narrative, was directly in her way, or whether she went thither in consequence of having "wandered," or lost her way, so it was, that she was reduced to the greatest distress. The bread might not be exhausted, but the water was; and no spring being to be found in this inhospitable place, she and Ishmael appear to have walked about, till he, overcome of thirst, could walk no longer. She had supported him, it seems, as long as she could; but, fearing he should die in her arms, she cast him under a shrub, just to screen him from the scorching sun, and "went and sat herself down over against him, a good way off, as it were a bow-shot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child! And she sat over against him, and lifted up her voice and wept."

Ver. 17, 18. A more finished picture of distress we shall seldom see. The bitter cries and flowing tears of the afflicted mother, with the groans of her dying son, are heard, and seen, and felt, in a manner as though we were present. And wherefore do they cry! Had there been any ear to hear them, any eye to pity them, or hand to help them, these cries and tears might have been mingled with hope: but, as far as human aid was concerned, there was no place for this. Whether any of them were directed to heaven we know not. We could have wished, and should almost have expected, that those of the mother at least would have been so; for surely she could not have forgotten Him who had seen and delivered her from a similar condition about sixteen years before, and who had then promised to "multiply her seed," and to cause this very child to "dwell in the presence of all his brethren." But, whether any of these expressions of distress were directed to God or not, the groans of the distressed reached his ear. "God heard the voice of the lad: and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? Fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad, where he is. Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation."

Ver. 19. At this instant, lifting up her eyes, she saw a spring of water, which before she had overlooked; and filling her bottle from it, returned to the lad and gave him drink. "To God the Lord belong the issues from death." He maketh strong the bands of the mocker; and again he looseth his prisoners, and delivereth those that were appointed to die. If Ishmael were at any future time possessed of true religion, he must look back upon these humbling but gracious dispensations of the God of his father Abraham with very tender emotions.

Ver. 20, 21. Whether Hagar and her son continued any longer in the wilderness of Beersheba we are not informed: it would rather seem that they left it and prosecuted their journey. They did not, however, settle in Egypt, though in process of time she took a wife for him from that country; but in "the wilderness of Paran," where the providence of God watched over him, and where he lived and perhaps maintained his mother by the use of the bow. But to return.

Ver. 22—24. Abraham still continued to sojourn in the land of the Philistines, not indeed at Gerar, but within a few miles of it. Here he was visited by king Abimelech, who, attended by the captain of his host, in the most friendly manner, in behalf of himself and his posterity, requested to live in perpetual amity with him. "God is with thee," saith he, "in all that thou doest. Now therefore swear unto me here, by God, that thou wilt not deal falsely with me, nor with my son, nor with my sons' son; but, according to the kindness that I have done unto thee, thou shalt do unto me, and to the land wherein thou hast sojourned. And Abraham said, I will swear." Observe, 1. The *motive* that induces this friendly request: he *saw that God was with him.* Probably the news of the extraordinary birth of Isaac had reached the court of Abimelech, and became a topic of conversation. This, said he, is a great man, and a great family, and will become a great nation: the

blessing of Heaven attends him. It is our wisdom, therefore, to take the earliest opportunity to be on good terms with him! Had Abimelech's successors always acted on this principle towards Israel, it had been better for them: for, whether they knew it or not, God in blessing Abraham had promised to "bless them that blessed him, and to curse them that cursed him." 2. The *solemnity* with which he wished the friendship to be confirmed: "Swear unto me by God." It is a dictate of prudence very common among magistrates, to require men to swear by a name which the party holds sacred. In this view, Abimelech certainly acted a wise part; for, whoever made light of God's name, the party here would not. 3. Abraham's cheerful and ready *compliance*. I hope he did not need to be sworn not to deal falsely; but as posterity was concerned, the more solemn the engagement the better. The friend of God has no desire but to be the friend of man.

Ver. 25, 26. Now that they are entering into closer terms of amity, however, it is proper that if there be any cause of complaint on either side, it should be mentioned and adjusted, that nothing which is past, at least, may interrupt their future harmony. Abraham accordingly makes mention of "a well of water" which Abimelech's servants had violently taken away. In this country, and to a man whose substance consisted much in cattle, a spring of water was of consequence; and to have it taken away by mere violence, though it might be borne with from an enemy, yet it is not to be overlooked where there is professed friendship. In this matter Abimelech fairly and fully exonerates himself: "I wot not," saith he, "who hath done this thing; neither didst thou tell me, neither yet heard I of it but to-day." Public characters cannot always be accountable for the misdeeds of those who act under them: they had need take care, however, what sort of servants they employ, as, while matters are unexplained, that which is wrong is commonly placed to their account.

Ver. 27—32. Abraham, satisfied with the answer, proceeds to enter into a solemn covenant with Abimelech, and, as it should seem, a covenant by sacrifice. (See on Chap. xv. 10.) The "sheep and oxen" appear to have been presented for this purpose; and the "seven ewe lambs" were probably a consideration to him, as lord of the soil, for a rightful and acknowledged propriety in the well. Having mutually sworn to this covenant of peace, the place where it was transacted was hence called *Beersheba, the well of the oath*, or the well of *seven*, alluding to the seven lambs which were given as the price of it. Matters being thus adjusted, Abimelech and Phicol, the chief captain of his host, took leave and departed.

Ver. 33, 34. Abraham being now quietly settled at Beersheba, "planted a grove, and called there on the name of Jehovah, the everlasting God." The grove might be for the shadowing of his tent, and perhaps, for a place of worship. Such places were afterwards abused to idolatry; or, if otherwise, they became unlawful when the temple was erected. The use which Abraham made of it was worthy of him. Such was his common practice: wherever he pitched his tent, there he reared an altar to the Lord. A lovely example this, to all those who would tread in the steps of the faith of Abraham. It does not appear, however, that this was a common, but rather a special act of worship; somewhat like that of Samuel, when he set up a stone between Mizpeh and Shen, and called it Ebenezer, saying, "Hitherto the Lord hath helped us." There are periods in life in which we are led to review the dispensations of God towards us, with special gratitude and renewed devotion. In this situation Abram continued "many days;" but still he is a sojourner," and such he must continue in the present world.

DISCOURSE XXX.

ABRAHAM COMMANDED TO OFFER UP HIS SON ISAAC.

Genesis xxii.

When Isaac was born, Abraham might be apt to hope that his trials were nearly at an end; but, if so, he was greatly mistaken. It is not enough that, in consequence of this event, he is called to give up Ishmael: a greater trial than this is yet behind.

"And it came to pass, after these things, that God did tempt Abraham." Many temptations had assailed him from other quarters, out of which God had delivered him: and does he after this become his tempter? As "God cannot be tempted with evil, so neither (in one sense) tempteth he any man." But he sees fit to *try* the righteous; and very frequently those most who are most distinguished by their faith and spirituality. So great a value doth the Lord set upon the genuine exercises of grace that all the grandeur of heaven and earth is overlooked, in comparison of "a poor and contrite spirit, which trembleth at his word." It is no wonder, therefore, that he should bring his servants into situations which, though trying to them, are calculated to draw forth these pleasant fruits.

In discoursing upon this temptation of

Abraham, I shall deviate from by usual practice of expounding verse by verse; and shall notice the trial itself—the conduct of the patriarch under it—the reward conferred upon him—and the general design of the whole.

First, with respect to *the trial itself.* The *time* of it is worthy of notice. The same things may be more or less trying as they are connected with other things. If the treatment of Job's friends had not been preceded by the loss of his substance, the untimely death of his children, the cruel counsel of his wife, and the heavy hand of God, it had been much more tolerable: and, if Abraham's faith and patience had not been exercised in the manner they were anterior to this temptation, it might have been somewhat different from what it was. It is also a much greater trial to be deprived of an object when our hopes have been raised, and in a manner accomplished, respecting it, than to have it altogether withheld from us. The spirits of a man may be depressed by a heavy affliction; but if he be nearly recovered, and experiences a relapse, if again he recovers, and again relapses, this is much more depressing than if no such hopes had been afforded him. "Thou hast lifted me up," said the Psalmist, "and cast me down!" Now such was the temptation of Abraham. It was "after these things" that God did tempt Abraham; that is, after five-and-twenty years' waiting; after the promise had been frequently repeated; after hope had been raised to the highest pitch: yea, after it had been actually turned into enjoyment; and when the child had lived long enough to discover an amiable and godly disposition.--Ver. 7.

The shock which it was adapted to produce upon his natural affections is also worthy of notice. The command is worded in a manner as if it were designed to harrow up all his feelings as a father: "Take now thy SON, thine ONLY SON (of promise)—Isaac, WHOM THOU LOVEST"—Or, as some read it, "Take now that son . . . . that only one of thine . . . . whom thou lovest . . . . that ISAAC"—and what? Deliver him to some other hand to sacrifice him? No: be thou thyself the priest: go, "offer him up for a burnt-offering!" When Ishmael was thirteen years old, Abraham could have been well contented to have gone without another son: but when Isaac was born, and had for a number of years been entwining round his heart, to part with him in this manner must, we should think be a rending stroke. Add to this, Isaac's having to carry the wood, and himself the fire and the knife; but, above all, the cutting question of the lad, asked in the simplicity of his heart, without knowing that he himself was to be the victim. "Behold the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering"—This would seem to be more than human nature could bear.

But the shock which it would be to natural affection is not represented as the principal part of the trial; but rather what it must have been to his *faith.* It was not so much his being his *son*, as his *only son of promise;* his Isaac, in whom all the great things spoken of his *seed* were to be fulfilled. When called to give up his other son, God condescended to give him a reason for it; but here no reason is given. In that case, though Ishmael must go, it is because he is not the child of promise; "for in Isaac shall thy seed be called." But, if Isaac go, who shall be a substitute for him?

Let us next observe *the conduct of Abraham* under this sharp trial. In general, we see no opposition, either from the struggles of natural affection or those of unbelief: all bow in absolute submission to the will of God. *We* may depict to ourselves how the former would revolt, and how the latter would rise up in rebellion, and what a number of plausible objections might have been urged; but there is not a single appearance of either *in Abraham.* We have here, then, a surprising instance of the efficacy of divine grace, in rendering every power, passion, and thought of the mind subordinate to the will of God. There is a wide difference between this and the extinction of the passions. That were to be deprived of feeling; but this is to have the mind assimilated to the mind of Christ, who, though he felt most sensibly, yet said, "If this cup may not pass from me, except I drink it, thy will be done!"

No sooner had the father of the faithful received the heavenly mandate than, without further delay, he prepares for the journey. Lot lingered, even when his own deliverance was at stake: but Abraham "rose early in the morning," in prompt obedience to God. He had to go three days' journey ere he reached the appointed spot; a distance perhaps of about sixty miles. Sarah seems to have known nothing of it. He takes only two young men with him to carry what was necessary; and, on his arrival within sight of the place, they were left behind. "Abide you here," said he, "with the ass, and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you." This would intimate that he wished not to be interrupted. In hard duties and severe trials, we should consider that we have enough to struggle with in our minds, without having any interruptions from other quarters. Great trials are best entered upon with but little company. Such was the precaution taken by our Lord himself. It is admirable to see how, in this

trying hour, Abraham possessed his soul. He lays the wood upon his son—takes the fire and the knife—they go both of them together—he evades the cutting question of Isaac so as to prevent disclosure, and yet in such a manner as to excite resignation to God—built the altar—stretched forth his hand—and took the knife with an intention to slay his son!

But what did he mean by telling his two servants that he and the lad would *come again* to them? These words, compared with those of the Apostles, in Hebrews xi. 17, explain the whole story. They show that Abraham from the first believed that the lad would in some way be restored to him, because God had said "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." He, expected no other than that he should have to slay him, and that he would be burnt to ashes; but, if so it were, he was persuaded that he should receive him again,—"Accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead." Such was the victory of faith.

Take notice, in the next place, of *the reward conferred upon him.* At the very moment when he was about to give the fatal stroke, and to which Isaac seems to have made no resistance, the angel of the Lord, who visited him at Mamre, and with whom he had interceded in behalf of Sodom, called unto him to forbear: "for now I know," saith he, "that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me." The Lord knew the heart of Abraham before he had tried him; but he speaks after the manner of men. It is by a holy and obedient reverence of the divine authority that faith is made manifest. As a sinner, Abraham was justified by faith only: but, as a professing believer, he was justified by the works which his faith produced. This accounts, I apprehend, for what is said by Paul on the former of these subjects, and by James on the latter. They both allege the example of Abraham; but the one respects him as *ungodly*, the other as *godly.* In the former instance he is justified by faith exclusive of works, or as having reference merely to the promised seed; in the latter by faith as producing works, and thereby proving him to be the friend of God.—Romans iv. 3—5; James ii. 21—24.

Abraham, being thus agreeably arrested in his design, makes a pause, and, lifting up his eyes, sees "a ram caught in a thicket by his horns." Him he takes, as provided of God, and "offers him up for a burnt-offering instead of his son." This extraordinary deliverance so impressed his mind that he called the name of the place "Jehovah-Jireh; the Lord will see, or provide." And this name seems to have become a kind of proverb in Israel, furnishing not only a memorial of God's goodness to Abraham, but a promise that he would interpose for them that trust in him at all times of extremity. To all this, the Lord adds a repetition of the promised blessing. The angel of the Lord who called unto him before, "called upon him a second time, saying, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord; for because thou has done this thing, and has not withheld thy son, thine only son, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand upon the sea-shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed my voice." Though the things here promised are much the same as had been promised before; yet they are more than a mere repetition. The terms are stronger than had ever been used on any former occasion, and, as such, more expressive of divine complacency. "Blessing, I will bless thee," &c., is a mode of speaking which denotes, I will *greatly* bless thee.—ch. iii. 16. It is also delivered in the form of an oath, that it may be a ground of strong consolation: and the same things which were promised before are now promised as the reward of this singular instance of obedience, to express how greatly God approved of it.

A few remarks on *the general design of the whole* will conclude this subject.—Though it was not the intention of God to permit Abraham actually to offer a human sacrifice, yet he might mean to assert his own right, as Lord of all, to require it, as well as to manifest the implicit obedience of faith in the conduct of his servant. Such an assertion of his right would manifest his *goodness* in refusing to exercise it. Hence, when children were sacrificed to Moloch, who had no such right, Jehovah could say in regard of himself, "It is what *I* commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into my mind." God never accepted but one human sacrifice; and blood in that case was not shed at his command, but by the wicked hands of men. It is necessary, however, that we should resign our lives, and every thing we have, to his disposal. We cannot be said to love him supremely if father, or mother, or wife, or children, or our own lives be preferred before him. The way to enjoy our temporal comforts is to resign them to God. When we have in this manner given them up, and receive them again at his hand, they become much sweeter, and are accompanied with blessings of greater value.

But in this transaction there seems to be a still higher design; namely, to predict in a figure the great substitute which God in

due time should "see and provide." The very place of it, called "the mount of the Lord," seems to have been marked out as the scene of great events; and of that kind too in which a substitutional sacrifice was offered and accepted. Here it was that David offered burnt-offerings, and peace-offerings, and called upon the Lord; and he answered him from Heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt-offering, and commanded the angel of death to put up his sword.—1 Chron. xxi. 26, 27. It was upon the same mountain that Solomon was afterwards directed to build the temple.—2 Chron. iii. 1. And if it were not at the very spot, it could not be far distant that the Saviour of the world was crucified. Mount Moriah was large enough to give name to a tract of land about it.—ver. 2. Mount Calvary therefore was probably a smaller mountain, which ascended from a certain part of it.—Hither then was led God's own Son, his only Son, whom he loved, and in whom all nations of the earth were to be blessed; nor was he spared at the awful crisis by means of a substitute, but was himself freely delivered up as a substitute of others.—One reason of the high approbation which God expressed of Abraham's conduct might be its affording some faint likeness of what would shortly be his own.

The chapter concludes with an account of Nahor's family who settled at Haran.—Probably this had not been given, but for the connexion which it had with the church of God. From them, Isaac and Jacob took them wives; and it is as preparatory to those events that the genealogy is recorded.

DISCOURSE XXXI.

THE DEATH AND BURIAL OF SARAH.

Gen. xxiii.

We have no such account of the death of any woman before, or of the respect paid to her memory, as is here given of Sarah.—She was not without her faults, and who is? But she was upon the whole a great female character. As such her name stands recorded in the New Testament among the worthies, and the memory of her was more than usually blessed.

Ver. 1, 2. Observe, 1. The *time* of her death. She was younger by ten years than Abraham, and yet died thirty-eight years before him. Human life is a subject of very uncertain calculation; God often takes the youngest before the eldest. She lived, however, thirty-seven years after the birth of Isaac, to a good old age, and went home as a shock of corn ripe in its season. 2. The *place*. It was anciently called Kirjath-Arba, afterwards Hebron, situated in the plain of Mamre, where Abraham had lived more than twenty years before he went into the land of the Philistines, and whither he had since returned.—Here Sarah died, and here Abraham *mourned* for her. We may take notice of the *forms* of it. He *came* to mourn; that is, he came into her tent where she died, and looked at her dead body; his eye affected his heart. There was none of that false delicacy of modern times which shuns to see or attend the burial of near relations. Let him see her, and let him weep; it is the last tribute of affection which he will be able in that manner to pay her. We should also notice the *sincerity* of it; he *wept*.—Many affect to mourn who do not weep; but Abraham both *mourned and wept*. Religion does not stop the course of nature, though it moderates it, and, by inspiring the hope of a blessed resurrection, prevents our being swallowed up of overmuch sorrow.

Ver. 3, 4. From mourning, which was commonly accompanied with sitting on the ground (Job i. 20, ii. 13; Lam. i. 1,) Abraham at length stood up from before his dead," and took measures to bury her. It is proper to indulge in weeping for a time, but there is a time for it to abate; and it is well there is. The necessary cares attending life are often a merciful means of rousing the mind from the torpor of melancholy. But see what a change death makes. Those faces which once excited strong sensations of pleasure, require now to be buried "out of our sight." In those times, and long afterwards, they appear to have had no public burying places; and Abraham often removing from place to place, and not knowing where his lot might be cast at the time, had not provided one. He had therefore at this time a burying-place to seek. As yet he had none inheritance in the land, though the whole was given him in promise. We see him here pleading for a grave as "a stranger and a sojourner." This language is commented upon by the apostle to the Hebrews: "They confessed," says he, "that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth; and they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country." Abraham did not sustain this character alone, nor merely on account of his having no inheritance in Canaan; for Israel, when put in possession of the land, were taught to consider it as properly *the Lord's*, and themselves as strangers and sojourners *with him* in it. Lev. xxv. 23.—Even David, who was king of Israel, made the same confession.—Ps. xxxix. 12.

Ver. 5—16. One admires to observe the courteous behaviour between Abraham and the Canaanites: for Heth was a son of Canaan. On his part having signified his desire, and receiving a respectful answer, he "bowed himself to them;" and, when he had fixed upon a spot in his mind, he does not ask it of the owner, but requests them to entreat him on his behalf; expressing also his desire to give him the full value of it, and refusing to accept it otherwise.—Nor is there anything wanting on their part; but every thing appears generous and lovely. Abraham calls himself a stranger and a sojourner; but they call him "a mighty prince among them;" give him the choice of their sepulchres; offer any one of them gratis; and, when he insisted on paying for it, mentions its value in the most delicate manner, intimating that such a sum was as nothing between them. Were commerce conducted on such principles, how pleasant would it be! How different from that selfish spirit described by Solomon, and still prevalent among men; "Naught, naught, saith the buyer: but, when he is gone his way, then he boasteth!" Civility, courtesy, and generosity, adorn religion. The plainness of Christianity is not a rude and insolent one: it stands aloof from flattery, but not from obliging behavior. Some who are very courteous to strangers are very much the reverse to those about them; but Abraham's behaviour to his neighbors is no less respectful than it was to the three strangers who called at his tent. It is painful to add, however, that civility and courtesy may be where there is no religion.—However it may tend to smooth the rugged paths of life, and however much we are indebted to the providence of God for it, yet this alone will not avail in the sight of God.

Ver. 17—20. Respecting the purchase of this sepulchre, I observe it was *an exercise of faith.* Jacob and Joseph had certainly an eye to the promise, in requesting their bones to be carried up from Egypt. A sepulchre was like an earnest, and indicated a persuasion of future possession.—Isa. xxii. 16. It would tend also to endear the land to his posterity. This was so much a dictate of nature that Nehemiah could urge it to a heathen king, whom no religious considerations would probably have influenced (Neh. ii. 3;) and, when to this was added the *character* of those who should be there deposited, it would render the country still more endeared. Heathens venerate the dust of their forefathers, but contemplate it without hope. It is not so with believers: those who should lie in this sepulchre walked with God in their generations; and, though dead, yet *lived* under the promise of a glorious resurrection.

Upon the whole, it is natural to wish to mingle dust with those whom we love: "Where thou diest there will I be buried." And sometimes with those whom we only respect: "When I am dead," said the old prophet of Bethel to his sons, "bury me in the sepulchre wherein the man of God is buried, and lay my bones beside his bones." But, after all, the chief concern is with whom we shall rise.

DISCOURSE XXXII.

ABAHAM SENDING HIS SERVANT TO OBTAIN A WIFE FOR ISAAC.

Genesis xxiv.

The last chapter contained a funeral; this gives an account of a marriage. Such are the changes of human life! Let not this minute narrative seem little in our eyes. It was thought by the Spirit of God to be of more importance than all that was at that time going on among the great nations of antiquity. It is highly interesting to trace great things to their small beginnings; and to them that love Zion it must be pleasant to observe the minute turns of providence in respect of its first fathers.

Ver. 1—9. Abraham being now an old man, and having lost the partner of his life, feels anxious to adjust his affairs, that he may be ready to follow her. "The Lord had blessed him in all things," and he had doubtless much to dispose of; but the greatest blessing of all related to his seed, and this occupies his chief attention. Aware that character, as well as happiness, greatly depended on a suitable connection, he was desirous that before he died he might discharge this part of the duty of a father. Calling to him therefore his eldest servant, who was already steward of his affairs, and in case of death must have been his trustee in behalf of Isaac, he bound him in a solemn oath respecting the wife that he should take to him. We are not here told the servant's name; but by the account which is given of him, compared with chap. xv. 2, it is not unlikely that it was Eliezer of Damascus.

The characters of men are not so easily ascertained from a few splendid actions as from the ordinary course of life, in which their real dispositions are manifested. In this domestic concern of Abraham we see several of the most prominent features of his character. 1. His decided aversion to idolatry. "I will make thee swear by Jehovah the God of Heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou wilt not take a wife un-

to my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell," Had Abraham then contracted a prejudice against his neighbors? This does not appear by what occurred between them in the last chapter. He does not complain of their treatment of him, but of their alienation from his God.—He has no objection to an exchange of civilities with them; but to take their daughters in marriage was the sure way to corrupt his own family. The great design of God, in giving the land to Abraham's posterity, was the eventual overthrow of idolatry, and the establishment of his true worship on earth. To what purpose then was he called from among Chaldean idolaters, if his son join affinity with those of Canaan? Such, or nearly such, were the sentiments which dictated the address to his servant. "The Lord God of Heaven, *who took me from my father's house*, and swear unto me, saying, *Unto thy seed will I give this land*, he shall send his angel before thee." 2. His godliness. There does not appear in all this concern the least taint of worldly policy, or any of those motives which usually govern men in the settlement of their children. No mention is made of riches, or honors, or natural accomplishments; but merely of what related to God. Let not the woman be a daughter of Canaan, but of the family of Nahor, who had forsaken Chaldean idolatry, and with Milcah his wife settled at Haran, and who was a worshipper of the true God.—Ch. xxxi. 52.—3. His faith, and obedience. The servant, being about to bind himself by oath, is tenderly concerned lest he should engage in more than he should be able to accomplish. "Peradventure," saith he, "the woman will not follow me into this land: must I needs bring thy son again to the land whence thou camest?" No: as Isaac must not marry a daughter of Canaan, neither must he leave Canaan to humor a daughter of Haran: for, though Canaan's daughters are to be shunned, yet Canaan itself is to be chosen as the Lord's inheritance, bestowed on the promised seed. Nor do these supposed difficulties at all deter Abraham: "The Lord God of Heaven," saith he, "who took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and who spake unto me, and swear unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land, HE shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence." On the ground of this promise, he would send him away, fully acquitting him of his oath, if the party should prove unwilling; only charging him not to bring Isaac to Haran, as he had before charged him not to marry him to a daughter of Canaan.

Ver. 10—14. Abraham's servant having on the above terms, consented to take the oath, now betakes himself to his journey. No time seems to have been lost; for his heart was in the business. He did not trouble his aged master in things of inferior moment; but, having all his affairs entrusted to him, adjusts those matters himself. Taking with him ten camels, and of course a number of attendants, partly for accommodation, and partly, we may suppose, to give a just idea of his master's substance, he set off for Mesopotamia, to the city of Nahor. Nothing remarkable occurs by the way: but arriving, on a summer's evening, at the outside of the city, he espies a well. Here he causes his camels to kneel down for rest, and with a design, as soon as opportunity offered, to furnish them with drink. Now it was customary in those countries for the women, at the time of the evening, to go out to draw water. Of this Abraham's servant is aware. And having placed himself and his camels by the well, in a waiting posture, he betakes himself to prayer for divine direction. Light as men make of such concerns in common, there are few things of greater importance, and in which there is greater need for imploring the guidance and blessing of Heaven. Upon a few minute turns at this period of life, more depends than can possibly be conceived at the time. Young people! pause a moment, and consider . . . Think of the counsel of God . . . . "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." That which is done for life, and which may involve things of another life, requires to be done well; and nothing can be done well in which the will of God is not consulted, and his blessing implored. Let us each pause a few minutes, too, and notice the admirable prayer of Abraham's servant. Truly, he had not lived with Abraham in vain! Observe, 1. The *character* under which he addresses the Great Supreme: "Oh Jehovah, God of my master Abraham." He well knew that Jehovah had entered into covenant with Abraham, and had given him exceedingly great and precious promises. By approaching him as a God in covenant, he would find matter for faith to lay hold upon; every promise to Abraham would thus furnish a plea, and turn to a good account. Surely this may direct us, in our approaches to a throne of grace, to make mention of a greater than Abraham, with whom also God is in covenant, and for whose sake the greatest of all blessings may be expected. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is to us what the God of Abraham was to Eliezer, and in the name of our Redeemer we may pray and hope for every thing that is great and good. 2. The *limitation* of the prayer to the present time: Send me good speed *this day*. We may in a gene-

ral way ask for grace for our whole lives; but our duty is more especially to seek direction at the time we want it. Our Lord teaches us to pray for daily bread as the day occurs. 3. The *sign* which he presumed to ask for; that the damsel to whom he should say so and so, and who should make such and such answers, should be the person whom the Lord had appointed for his servant Isaac. In this he might be under extraordinary influence, and his conduct therefore affords no example to us. The sign he asked, however, was such as would manifest the qualifications which he desired and expected to find in a companion who should be worthy of his master's son; namely, industry, courtesy, and kindness to strangers. 4. The *faith* in which the prayer was offered. He speaks all along under a full persuasion that the providence of God extended to the minutest events, to their behaviour, of which at the time they are scarcely conscious. His words are also full of humble confidence that God would direct him in a matter of so much consequence to his church in all future ages. I believe, if we were to search the Scriptures through, and select all the prayers that God has answered, we should find them to have been the prayers of faith.

Ver. 15—28. While he was speaking a damsel with a pitcher upon her shoulder, came towards the well. By her appearance he is possessed with the idea that she is the person, and that the Lord hath heard his prayer. He said nothing to her till she had gone down to the well, and was come up again. Then he ran towards her, and addressed her in the words which he had resolved to do, entreating permission to drink a little water of her pitcher. To this she cheerfully consented, and offered her assistance to give drink also to his camels: all exactly in the manner which he had prayed for. The gentleness, cheerfulness, assiduity, and courtesy manifested towards a stranger, of whom she at present could have no knowledge, is truly admirable.—The words in which it is described are picturesque and lively to the highest degree. We need only read them in order to feel ourselves in the midst of the pleasing scene. "And she said, Drink, my lord: and she hasted, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink. And when she had given him drink, she said, I will draw for thy camels also, until they have done drinking. And she hasted and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw, and drew for all his camels." This conduct, in itself so amiable, and so exactly in unison with the previous wishes of the man, struck him with a kind of amazement, accompanied with a momentary hesitation whether all could be true. "Wondering at her, he held his peace, to wit, whether the Lord had made his journey prosperous or not." We pray for blessings, and when our prayers are answered, we can scarcely believe them to be so. There are cases in which the mind, like the eye by a great and sudden influx of light, is overpowered. Thus Zion, though importunate in prayer for great conversions, yet, when they come, is described as being in a manner confounded with them: "Thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged—thou shalt say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these?" Recovering from his astonishment, and being satisfied that the Lord had indeed heard his prayer, he opens his treasures, and presents the damsel with certain eastern ornaments, which he had provided for the purpose; inquiring at the same time after her kindred, and whether they had room to lodge him. Being told, in answer, that she was the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Nahor and Milcah," and that they had plenty of accommodation for him and his company, his heart is so full that he cannot contain himself, but even in the presence of Rebecca, and perhaps the men who were with him, "bowed down his head and worshipped, saying, Blessed be Jehovah, God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I being in the way, Jehovah led me to the house of my master's brother!" We see here not only a grateful mind, equally disposed to give thanks for mercy as to pray for it, but a delicate and impressive manner of communicating to Rebecca a few particulars which he wished her to know. His words were addressed to the Lord; but, being spoken in her hearing, she would perceive by them who he was, whence he came, and that the hand of the God of Abraham was in the visit, whatever was the object of it. Full of joyful surprise, she runs home, with the bracelets upon her hands, and tells the family of what had passed.—But here I must break off for the present, and leave the conclusion of this interesting story to another discourse.

DISCOURSE XXXIII.

ABRAHAM SENDING HIS SERVANT TO OBTAIN A WIFE FOR ISAAC.—(CONTINUED.)

Gen. xxiv. 29—67.

Ver. 29—31. As yet, no one suspects the object of the visit; but all hearts are full, and there is much running hither and thither. No mention is made at present of Bethuel, or of Milcah; they were aged

people, and the affairs of the family seem principally to have devolved on its younger branches. Laban appears to have taken a very active part in this business. Hearing his sister's tale, and seeing the ornaments upon her hands, he is all alive, and runs towards the well, to welcome the man into his house. By the account which is afterwards given of Laban, it is perhaps more than probable that these golden ornaments had great influence on what would otherwise appear a very generous behavior.—His whole history shows him to have been a mercenary man; and we frequently see in such characters the truth of Solomon's remarks: "A man's gift maketh room for him.—It is as a precious stone in the eyes of him that hath it: whithersoever it turneth, it prospereth." If a man be in straits, he is coldly treated; but, if once he begin to rise in the world, he becomes another man, and his company and acquaintance are courted. Such is the spirit of this world. But, whatever were Laban's motives, he carried it very kindly to Abraham's servant. Finding him at the well, modestly waiting for a farther invitation from some of the heads of the family, he accosted him in language that would have befitted the lips of a much better man: "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord: wherefore standest thou without? For I have prepared the house, and room for the camels." It becomes us to bless and welcome those whom the Lord hath blessed, nor must we confine it to those whom he hath blessed with outward prosperity: a Christian spirit is in the sight of God of great price, and ought to be so in ours.

Ver. 32, 33. On this becoming invitation, the man goes into the house; and we see Laban very attentive. First, he ungirds the poor beasts which had borne the burdens, and furnishes them with provender; then he provides water for the man, and those who were with him, to wash their feet; and, after this, sets meat before him. All this is proper. But the good man's heart is full, and he cannot eat till he has told his errand. Such are the feelings of a servant of God whose heart is in his work. Where this is the case, personal indulgence will give place to things of greater importance. "I will not give sleep to mine eyes," said David, "Nor slumber to mine eye-lids, till I find out a place for Jehovah a habitation for the mighty God of Jacob." While the woman of Samaria was gone to tell her neighbors of the man who had told her all things that ever she did, his disciples, knowing how weary and faint he must have been, "prayed him to eat." But, seeing the Samaritans flocking down the hill to hear the word of God, he answered, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of.—My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. Say ye not, There are yet four months, and then cometh the harvest? Behold—lift up your eyes, and look on (yonder companies)—the fields are white already to harvest!"

Ver. 34, 35. Being requested to tell his tale, the servant begins by informing them who he is. His prayer "to the God of his master Abraham," in the hearing of Rebecca, might possibly have superseded the necessity of this part of his statement, but, lest it should not, he tells them expressly, "I am Abraham's servant." He was an upright man, and upright men do not conceal who they are. He was also an humble man, and humble men are not ashamed to own their situation in life, though it be that of a servant. A vain man might have talked about himself, and that he was the first servant of the house, the steward that ruled over all that Abraham had, and that all his master's goods were in his hand.—Esther v. 11, 12. But not a word of this is heard; for his heart was set on his errand. He has no objection, however, to tell of the glory of his master; for this would tend to promote the object. Nor does he fail to acknowledge the hand of God in it: "The Lord hath blessed my master greatly." And if they were worthy to be connected with Abraham, this would tend farther to promote the object; yea, more than all the riches and glory of Abraham without it.

Ver. 36. And now for the first time he makes mention of *Isaac*. A messenger less ingenuous might have given a hint of this kind to the damsel, when he presented her with the "ear-ring and bracelets:" but so did not Abraham's servant. Not an intimation of the kind is given till he is before her parents. In their presence, and that of the whole family, he frankly makes mention of his master's son; and as his object was to recommend him to their esteem, and to prepossess Rebecca in his favor, it is admirable to see how he accomplishes his end. All is in the form of a simple narrative; yet every moving consideration is worked into it that the subject will admit. In only this single verse we observe four circumstances touched upon, each of which would have a powerful effect—He was the son of the highly honored Abraham—by the much-loved Sarah—in their old age—(of course he himself must be young)—and was made heir of all his father's substance.

Ver. 37, 38. Hence he proceeds to a still more explicit mention of the object of his journey, mixing with it such grounds or reasons as must ingratiate both his master and his master's son in their esteem, and so tend to accomplish his design. He informs them that Abraham was utterly averse from

his son's being united with a daughter of Canaan; so much so that he even made him solemnly swear upon the subject. The family at Haran might possibly have thought that ere now Abraham had forgotten his old friends, and formed new connexions: but they would perceive by this that he had not. There is a charming delicacy in his introducing the subject of marriage. He speaks of "a wife being taken" for his master's son; but first mentions it in reference to the daughters of Canaan, whom he must *not* take, before he suggests any thing of the person he wished to take; thus giving them to infer what was coming ere he expressed it. And now, having intimated the family whom his master preferred, he represents him as speaking of them in the most affectionate language: "My father's house, my kindred."

Ver. 39—41. Next he repeats what passed between his master and himself, as to the supposed willingness or unwillingness of the party; and here also we see much that will turn to account. In expressing Abraham's persuasion in the affair, he appeals to their piety. It was saying, in effect, The hand of God was in it; and this with godly minds would be sure to weigh. Indeed it did weigh; for, when required to give an answer it was this: "The thing proceedeth from the Lord." Religion, thus mingled with natural affection, sanctifies it, and renders sweetness itself more sweet In repeating also the words of Abraham, Thou shalt take a wife for my son "of my kindred, and of my father's house," he touches and retouches the strings of fraternal love. And in that he intimates that his master had laid nothing more upon him than to tell his tale, and leave the issue to the Lord, he gives them to understand that whether they are willing or unwilling he should be clear of his oath. In this, and several other parts of this pleasant story, our thoughts must needs run to the work of Christ's servants, in espousing souls to him. They may be clear of the blood of all men, though sinners may be unwilling: and it is their duty to tell them so; that while, on the one hand, they allure them by exhibiting the glory of their Master, they may, on the other, convince them that their message is not to be trifled with. Both are means appointed of God to bring them to Christ; and, if the Lord be with them in their work, such will be the effect.

Ver. 42—49. The *repeating* of the interview with Rebecca at the well was all admirably in point, and of a tendency to bring the matter to a crisis.—I came to the well—I called on the God of my master Abraham—I asked for a sign—a sign was given me—every thing answered to my prayer—judge ye—let Rebecca judge—whether the hand of the Lord be not in it? "And now, if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me, and if not, tell me; that I may turn to the right hand, or to the left."

Ver. 50, 52. With this simple but interesting account., the whole family is overcome: one sentiment bows every mind. Rebecca says nothing; but her heart is full. It is an affair in which little or nothing seems left for creatures to decide. "The thing," say they, "proceedeth from the Lord: we cannot speak unto thee good or bad. Behold, Rebecca is before thee; take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the Lord hath spoken!" Such was the happy result of this truly religious courtship; and the good man, who saw God in all things, still keeps up his character. Hearing their words, he bowed himself to the earth, and worshipped God! How sweet would all our temporal concerns be rendered, if they were thus intermingled with godliness!

Ver. 53. The main things being settled, he, according to the customs of those times, presents the bride elect with "jewels of silver, jewels of gold, and raiment" suited to the occasion; and, farther to conciliate the esteem of the family, "he gave also to her brother, and to her mother, precious things." Presents, when given from sincere affection, are very proper, and productive of good effects. It is by mutual interchange of kind offices that love is often kindled, and always kept alive. Our Saviour accepted the presents which were offered him, not only of food, but raiment, and even the anointing of his feet. Where love exists, it is natural and grateful to express it in acts of kindness.

Ver. 54, 58. The good man would not eat till he had told his errand; but, now that his work is done, he and the men who were with him both eat and drink: and doubtless it would add to the enjoyment of their meal to know that the Lord had made their way prosperous. The next morning, having accomplished his object, the diligent and faithful servant wants to be going. To this proposal however, though honorable to him as a servant, the mother and the brother object; pleading for a few days, ten at least, ere they parted; nor does their objection seem to be unreasonable. Though willing on the whole that she should go, yet parting is trying work, especially when they considered that they might never see her more in this world, as in truth they never did. The man, however, knows not how to consent to it; but entreats that he might not be hindered, seeing the Lord had prospered his way. Whether we consider him as too pressing in this case, or not, we may lay it down as a general rule never to

hinder those who are engaged in a right way, and who have received manifest tokens that God hath blessed them in it. The case being somewhat difficult, and neither of the parties disposed to disoblige the other, they consent to leave it to the damsel herself. A few days to take leave of her friends could not, we may suppose, have been disagreeable to her; but seeing as she did, so much of God in the affair, and the man's heart so deeply set upon it; feeling also her own heart entirely in it, she would not so much as seem to make light of it, or hinder it even for an hour; but, far from all affectation answered, "I will go."

Ver. 59, 60. And now preparation is made for her departure. Before she goes she must be provided with "a nurse." Rebecca's having been employed in drawing water, we see, was no proof of the poverty of her parents, but rather of the simplicity of the times. Daughters were not yet taught to be so delicate as scarcely to "adventure to set the sole of their foot upon the ground." But, now that she is going to leave her family, it is desirable that she should have one of its domestics, who had probably been brought up with her from her childhood, who in times of affliction would kindly wait on her, and at all times be a friend and companion. The name of this nurse was Deborah. We hear no more of her till we are told of her death. She appears to have survived her mistress, and to have died in the family of Jacob, much lamented.—ch. xxxv. 8. To an affectionate nurse, they added a parting blessing. The language used in it shows that Abraham's servant had told them of the promises which God had made to his master, and which were to be fulfilled in Isaac and his posterity. They speak as believing the truth of them, and as having their hearts full of hope and joy, amidst the natural sorrow which must have attended the parting scene. "They blessed Rebecca, and said unto her, Thou art our sister; be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those that hate them!"

Ver. 61, 63. Taking leave of Haran, they go on their way towards Canaan. A little before their arrival at Hebron, they are unexpectedly met by a person who was taking an evening walk. This was no other than Isaac. It may be thought that he was looking out in hope of meeting them; but we are expressly told that his walk was for another purpose, namely to "meditate." It is a word which is sometimes used for *prayer*, and hence it is so rendered in the margin of our bibles. He was a man of reflection and prayer; and, in the cool of the evening, it might be common for him to retire an hour to converse as we should say, with himself and with his God. Admitting that the thought might occur; I may possibly see my father's servant on his return; still his object would be, on such an important turn in his life, to commit the matter to God. Those blessings are likely to prove substantial and durable which are given us in answer to prayer.

Ver. 64, 65. Rebecca, having espied a stranger approaching towards them, inquires of her guide whether he knew him; and, being told that it was no other than his young "master," she modestly alighted from the camel, and took a veil and covered herself. This eastern head-dress might in the present instance answer a double purpose: First, it would express her subjection to her husband, as being already his espoused wife. Secondly, it would prevent that confusion which the exposure of her person, especially in so sudden and unexpected a manner, must have occasioned.

Ver. 66, 67. Isaac, observing her to have put on her veil, very properly avoids addressing himself to her; but, walking awhile with the servant by himself, heard the whole narrative of his journey, which appears to have wrought on his mind as the former had wrought on that of Rebecca. And now the marriage is consummated. "Isaac brought her into his mother Sarai's tent, and took Rebecca, and she became his wife, and he loved her: and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death." In this tender manner is the admirable story closed. Who can forbear wishing them all happiness? The union of filial and conjugal affection is not the least honorable trait in the character of this amiable man. "He brought her into his mother Sarah's tent;" and was then, and not till then, comforted for the loss of her. Dutiful sons promise fair to be affectionate husbands: he that fills up the first station in life with honor is thereby prepared for those that follow. God, in mercy, sets a day of prosperity over against a day of adversity. Now he woundeth our spirits by dissolving one tender union, and now bindeth up our wounds by cementing another.

DISCOURSE XXXIV.

ABRAHAM'S MARRIAGE WITH KETURAH, AND DEATH.—ISHMAEL'S POSTERITY AND DEATH.—THE BIRTH AND CHARACTERS OF ESAU AND JACOB.

Gen. xxv.

This chapter gives an account of several changes in the families of Abraham, Ishmael, and Isaac. In each, the sacred wri-

ter keeps his eye on the fulfilment of the great promise to the father of the faithful.

Ver. 1—6. The marriage of Abrabam to Keturah, is an event which we should not have expected. From the last account we had of him, charging his servant respecting the marriage of his son Isaac, we were prepared to look for his being buried rather than married. I do not know that it was a sin; but it is easy to see in it more of man than of God. No reason is given for it; no marks of divine approbation attend it; five and thirty years pass over with little more than recording the names of his children, and that not from any respect to the connection, but to show the fulfilment of the divine promise of multiplying his seed. During this last period of his life we see nothing of that extraordinary strength of faith by which he was formerly distinguished; but like Sampson when he had lost his hair, he is become weak like another man. While the promise of Isaac was pending, and while Abraham was employed in promoting that great object, the cloud of glory accompanies all his movements: but this being accomplished, and his mind diverted to something else, the cloud now rests upon Isaac; and he must walk the remainder of his way in a manner without it.

Who Keturah was we are not told: probably she was one of his family. She and Hagar are called *concubines*. This does not mean, however, that they were not his lawful wives, but that they occupied a less honorable station than Sarah, who was a fellow heir with him in promise. Keturah bare Abraham six sons, among whose descendants were preserved, in some measure, the knowledge and fear of the true God. From one of them, namely Midian, descended Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses; and it is not improbable that Job and his friends had the same general origin.

We have seen how the last thirty-five years of Abraham's life fall short of what it was in former periods: it is pleasant, however, to observe that his sun does not set in a cloud. There are several circumstances which shed a lustre upon his end. Among others, his regard for Isaac, constituting him his heir, and settling his other sons at a sufficient distance from him, shows that his heart was still with God's heart, or that he whom the Lord had chosen was the object to whom his thoughts were chiefly directed. He was not wanting in paternal goodness to any of his children. Though Ishmael was sent away, and as it should seem by the other parts of the history with nothing, yet it is here plainly intimated that his father *gave gifts* to him, as well as to the sons of Keturah. Probably he visited and provided for him in the wilderness of Paran, and gave him a portion when he married. But God's covenant being established with Isaac, *his* settlement in Canaan is that to which all the others are rendered subservient. All this shows that his faith did not fail; that he never lost sight of the promise in which he had believed for justification; but that as he had lived so he died.

Ver. 7—10. Let us notice the death and burial of this great and good man. His death is expressed by a common but impressive scriptural phrase—"he gave up the ghost:" and his burial by another—"he was gathered to his people." The one is the parting of body and soul: the other the mingling of our dust with that of our kindred who have gone before us. Even in the grave, it is natural to wish to associate with those whom we have known and loved on earth; and still more in the world to come. When all the sons of Adam shall be assigned their portion, each in a sense will be gathered to his people! The inscription on his tomb, if I may so call it, was, "He died in a good old age." On this I have two remarks to offer. 1. It was *according to promise*. Upwards of fourscore years before this, the Lord told Abraham in a vision, saying, "Thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age." In every thing, even in death, the promises are fulfilled to Abraham. 2. It is language that is *never used of wicked men*, and *not very commonly of good men*. It is used of Gideon and David (Judges viii. 32; 1 Chron. xxix. 28;) and I know not whether of any other. The idea answers to what is spoken by the Psalmist, "They shall bring forth fruit in old age;" or that in Job, "Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season." Isaac and Ishmael are both present at his funeral. We have no account of their having ever seen each other before, from the day that Ishmael was cast out as a mocker; but, whether they had or not, they met at their father's interment. Death brings those together who know not how to associate on any other occasion, and will bring us all together sooner or later. Finally, the place where they buried him was the same as that in which he had buried his beloved Sarah.

Ver. 11. The death and burial of so great and good a man as Abraham must have made an impression upon survivors: howbeit, the cause of God died not. "It came to pass after the death of Abraham that God blessed his son Isaac." Isaac was heir to the promise; and though all flesh withereth and fadeth like the grass, yet the word of the Lord shall stand forever. We shall hear more of Isaac soon; at present we are only told, in general, that he "dwelt by the well of Lahai-roi." It was necessa-

ry in those countries to fix their residence by a well; and it is no less necessary, if we wish to live, that we fix ours near to the ordinances of God. The well where Isaac pitched his tent was distinguished by two interesting events: 1. The merciful appearance of God to Hagar whence it received its name---"*The well of him that liveth and seeth me.*" Hagar or Ishmael, methinks should have pitched a tent there, that it might have been to them a memorial of past mercies; but, if they neglect it, Isaac will occupy it. The gracious appearance of God in a place endears it to him, let it have been to whom it may. 2. It was the place from the way of which he first met his beloved Rebecca; there therefore they continue to dwell together.

Ver. 12—18. A short account is here given of Ishmael's posterity, and of his death. His sons were numerous and great; they had their *towns and castles;* nay, more, they are denominated "twelve princes, according to their nations." Thus amply was fulfilled the promise of God concerning him: "Behold I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly: twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation." But this is all. When a man leaves God and his people, the sacred historian leaves him. After living in prosperity a hundred and thirty-seven years, "he gave up the ghost and died;" and "was gathered unto his people." As this language is applicable to men, whether good or bad, no conclusion can be drawn from it in favor of his having feared God. It is added that "he died in the presence of all his brethren;" that is, in peace, or with his friends about him; which, considering how his hand had been against every man, and of course every man's hand against him, was rather surprising; but so it had been promised of the Lord to his mother, at *the well* Lahai-roi: "He shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren." So he lived and so he died, an object of providential care for his father's sake; but, as to any thing more, the oracles of God are silent.

Ver. 19—23. The history now returns to the son of promise. Forty years old was he when he took Rebecca to wife; and for twenty years afterwards he had no issue. We should have supposed that, as the promise partly consisted in a multiplication of his seed, the great number of his children would have made a prominent part of his history. When Bethuel, and Milcah, and Laban, took leave of Rebecca, saying, "Be thou the mother of thousands of millions," they doubtless expected to hear of a very numerous family. And she herself, and her husband, would, as believing the divine promise, expect the same. But God's thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor his ways as our ways. Abraham's other son's abound in children, while he in whom his seed is to be as the stars of heaven for multitude lives childless. In this manner God had tried his father Abraham; and, if he be heir to his blessings, he must expect to inherit a portion of his trials. God bestows his mercies upon wicked men, without waiting for their prayers: but his conduct is somewhat different with them that fear him. Isaac had received Rebecca in answer to prayer; and let him not expect to receive seed by her in any other way. Well, the good man is led to pray: "Isaac intreated the Lord for his wife, because she was barren; and the Lord was intreated of him, and Rebecca conceived." During the time of her pregnancy, she was the subject of some extraordinary sensations, which filling her mind with perplexity, she "inquired of the Lord." Both the entreaty of Isaac, and the inquiry of Rebecca, might be improper in ordinary cases; but, as it was not the natural desire of children that prompted him, so neither was it an idle curiosity that excited her; they each kept in view the promise of all nations being blessed in their posterity, and therefore were not only solicitous for children, but anxious concerning every thing which seemed indicative of their future character. And as Isaac had received an answer to prayer, so it is revealed to Rebecca that the sensations which she felt were signs of other things—that she was pregnant of twins—that they should become *two nations*—and not only so, but two *manner* of nations—lastly, that *the elder should serve the younger.* The struggle between these children, which was expressive of the struggles that should in after ages take place between their posterity, furnished another instance of the opposition between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, both which are found in most religious families. Paul introduces this case as an instance of the sovereignty of God in the dispensation of his grace.—The rejection of a great part of the Jewish nation was to some a stumbling block. It seemed to them as if the word of promise to the fathers had taken none effect. The Apostle, in answer, maintains that it was not the original design of God in the promise to save all Abraham's posterity; but, on the contrary, that from the beginning he drew a line of distinction between Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, though all were alike descended from him according to the flesh. To a further supposed objection, that such a distinction between children, while they were yet unborn, reflected on the *righteousness* of God, he contents himself with denying the consequence, and asserting the absolute right of God to have

mercy on whom he will have mercy.

Ver. 24—28. As there were extraordinary sensations during the pregnancy of the mother, so in the birth of the children there was a certain circumstance which betokened that the one should prevail over the other; and that not only in his person, but in his posterity. Hence the prophet Hosea, reproaching the degenerate sons of Jacob, says of him, "He took his brother by the heel in the womb—and by his strength had power with God." But as if he should say, are you worthy of being called his children? —Hos. xii. 3.

From the circumstances attending the birth of a child, it was common in those ages to derive their names; and thus it was in the present instance. The first-born, from his color, was called *Esau*, i. e. *red:* the younger, from the circumstance of his taking hold of his brother's heel, was called *Jacob*, a *supplanter*. Both these names were prophetic. Esau was of a sanguinary disposition, and his posterity, the Edomites, always cherished a most *cruel* and *bloody* antipathy against Israel. In allusion to this, when the enemies of the church are punished, they are not only represented as Edomites, but God is described as giving them as it were blood for blood.—"Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? Wherefore art thou *red* in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat? I have trodden the wine-press alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury, and their *blood* shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment." Jacob on the other hand, supplanted his brother in the affair of the birth-right, as we shall see presently. As his having hold of his brother's heel seemed as if he would have drawn him back from the birth, and have been before him, so his mind in after life appeared to aspire after the blessing of the first-born, and never to have rested till he had obtained it.

As they grew up they discovered a different turn of mind. Esau was the expert huntsman, quite *a man of the field:* but Jacob was simple hearted, preferring the more gentle employment of rearing and tending cattle. The partiality of Isaac towards Esau, on account of his venison, seems to have been a weakness rather unworthy of him: that of Rebecca towards Jacob appears to have been better founded; her preference was more directed by the prophecies which had gone before of him, choosing him whom the Lord had chosen.

Ver. 29—34. In process of time, a circumstance arose in the family which in its consequences was very serious. Jacob was one day boiling some pottage, perhaps for his dinner; for he lived mostly upon herbs. Just then came in Esau from hunting, very faint and hungry, and had a great mind to Jacob's pottage. Its very color, corresponding with his sanguinary disposition, seemed to take his fancy; on which account he was called Edom, a name commonly applied to his posterity, and of similar import with that which was at first given to him. There seems, at first sight, to be something ungenerous in Jacob's availing himself of his brother's hunger in the manner he did; but, if there were, however it may reflect dishonor upon him, it reflects none upon the event. God often brings his purposes to pass by means which on man's part are far from justifiable. The reformation was a great and good work, and we may wish to vindicate every measure which contributed to it; but that is more than we can do. God's thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor his ways as our ways. It will be found that "he is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works;" but this is more than can be said of his best servants in any age of the world. A close inspection of this affair, however, will convince us, that whether Jacob was right as to the means he used or not, his *motives* were good, and those of Esau were evil. Observe, particularly. 1. The birthright attached to seniority. 2. It ordinarily consisted in the excellence of dignity, the excellence of power, and a double portion.—Genesis xlix. 3; Deut. xxi. 17. 3. These privileges of the first-born were in several instances forfeited by the misconduct of the parties; as in the case of Cain, Reuben, &c. 4. There was in the family of Abraham a peculiar blessing, which was supposed to be attached to the birthright, though God in several instances put it into another direction.—This blessing was principally spiritual and distant, having respect to the setting up of God's kingdom, to the birth of the Messiah, or, in other words, to all those great things included in the covenant with Abraham.—This was well understood by the family: both Esau and Jacob must have often heard their parents converse about it. If the birthright that was bought at this time had consisted in any temporal advantages of dignity, authority, or property to be enjoyed in the life-time of the parties, Esau would not have made so light of it as he did, calling it *this* birthright, and intimating that he should soon die, and then it would be of no use to him.* It is a fact, too, that Jacob

* He could not mean surely that he should then die of hunger, unless he ate of the pottage; for that is scarcely conceivable, while he had full access to all the provisions in Isaac's house: but that in a little time he should be dead; and then of what account would those fine promises be to him!

had none of the ordinary advantages of the birthright during his life-time. Instead of a double portion, he was sent out of the family with only *a staff* in his hand, leaving Esau to possess the whole of his father's substance. And when, more than twenty years afterwards, he returned to Canaan, he made no scruple to ascribe to his brother the excellence of dignity, and the excellence of power, calling him *My lord Esau*, and acknowledging himself as his *servant*. The truth is, the question between them was, which should be heir to the blessings promised in the covenant with Abraham. This Jacob desired and Esau despised; and in despising the blessings of so sacred a nature, and that for a morsel of meat, he was guilty of profaneness. The spirit of his language was, "I cannot live upon promises: give me something to eat and drink, for to-morrow I die." Such is the spirit of unbelief in every age; and thus it is that poor deluded souls continue to despise things distant and heavenly, and prefer to them the momentary gratifications of flesh and sense.

From the whole, we may perceive in this case a doctrine which runs through the Scriptures; namely, that, while the salvation of those that are saved is altogether grace, the destruction of those that are lost will be found to be of themselves. From what is recorded of Jacob, he certainly had nothing to boast of; neither had Esau any thing to complain of. He lost the blessing, but not without having first despised it.—Thus when the apostle had asserted the doctrine of election and grounded it upon God's absolute right to have mercy on whom he would have mercy, he nevertheless proceeds to ascribe the cause of the overthrow of them that perish merely to themselves. "But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith; but as it were by the works of the law: for they stumbled at the stumbling-stone." I am aware that when we preach in this manner, many are ready to accuse us of inconsistency. "You preach the doctrine of election," say they; "but before you have done you destroy your own work, by telling the unconverted that if they perish, the fault will lie at their own door." We answer it is enough for us to teach, what the Scriptures teach. If we cannot conceive how the purposes of God are to be reconciled with the agency and accountableness of man, let us be content to be ignorant of it. The Scriptures teach both; and true wisdom will not aspire to be wise above what is written.

DISCOURSE XXXV.

ISAAC AND ABIMELECH.

Gen. xxvi.

We saw Abraham in a great variety of situations, by means of which sometimes his excellences and sometimes his failings became the more conspicuous. Isaac has hitherto been but little tried, and therefore his character is but little known. In this chapter, however, we shall see him roused from his retirement, and brought into situations in which, if there be some things to lament, there will be many to admire.

Ver. 1, 6. We now see him *in affliction*, by reason of "a famine in the land, besides the first famine that was in the days of Abraham." There seem to have been more famines in the times of the patriarchs than usual; which must not only be afflictive to them in common with their neighbors, but tend more than a little to try their faith. Every such season must prove a temptation to think lightly of the land of promise. Unbelief would say, "It is a land that eateth up the inhabitants:" it is not worthy waiting for. But faith will conclude that he who hath promised to give it is able to bless it. Thus Abraham believed, and therefore took every thing patiently; and thus it is with Isaac. He first went to Abimelech, king of the Philistines, at Gerar. His father Abraham had found kind treatment there about a hundred years before, and there was a covenant of peace between them. It seems, however, as if he had thought of going as far as Egypt; but the Lord appeared to him at Gerar, and admonished him to put himself under his direction, and go no where without it. "Dwell," saith he, "in the land that I shall tell thee of: sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and I will bless thee." In times of trouble we are apt to cast, and forecast, what we shall do: but God mercifully checks our anxiety, and teaches us, by such dispensations in all our ways to acknowlege him. To satisfy Isaac that he should never want a guide, or a provider, the Lord renews to him the promises which had been made to his father Abraham. Had he met with nothing to drive him from his retreat by the well of Lahai-roi, he might have enjoyed more quiet; but he might not have been indulged with such great and precious promises. Times of affliction, though disagreeable to the flesh, have often proved our best times.

Two things are observable in this solemn renewal of the covenant with Isaac. 1. The good things promised. The sum of these blessings is, the land of Canaan, a numerous progeny, and, what is the great-

est of all, the Messiah, in whom the nations should be blessed. On these precious promises Isaac is to live. God provided him with bread in the day of famine; but he lived not on bread only, but on the words which proceeded from the mouth of God. It was in reference to such words as these that Moses said unto Hobab, "We are journeying to the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good; for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel." 2. Their being given for Abraham's sake: "Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws." We are expressly informed in what manner this patriarch was accepted of God, namely, as "believing on him who justifieth the ungodly;" and this accounts for the acceptance of his works. The most *spiritual sacrifices*, being offered by a sinful creature, can no otherwise be acceptable to God than by *Jesus Christ;* for, as President Edwards justly remarks, "It does not consist with the honor of the majesty of the King of heaven and earth to accept of any thing from a condemned malefactor, condemned by the justice of his own holy law, till that condemnation be removed." But, a sinner being accepted as believing in Jesus, his works also are accepted for his sake, and become rewardable. It was in this way, and not of works, that Abraham's obedience was honored with so great a reward. The blessings here promised are called the *mercy* to Abraham.—Mic. vii. 20. Hence we perceive the fallacy of an objection to the New-testament doctrine of our being forgiven and blessed in Christ's *name*, and for *his sake;* that this is no more than was true of Israel, who were blessed and often forgiven for the sake of Abraham. "Instead of this fact making against the doctrine in question," says a late judicious writer, "it makes for it; for it is clear from hence that it is not accounted an improper or unsuitable thing, in the divine administration, to confer favors on individuals, and even nations, *out of respect to the piety of another to whom they stood related.* But, if this principle be admitted, the salvation of sinners out of respect to the obedience and sufferings of Christ, cannot be objected to as unreasonable. To this may be added that every degree of divine respect to the obedience of the patriarchs was in fact no other than respect to the obedience of Christ, in whom they believed, and through whom their obedience, like ours, became acceptable. The light of the moon, which is derived from its looking as it were on the face of the sun, is no other than the light of the sun itself reflected. But if it be becoming the wisdom of God to reward the righteousness of his servants, and that many ages after their decease, so highly (which was only borrowed lustre,) much more may he reward the righteousness of his Son, from which it originated, in the salvation of those that believe in him."*

The renewal of these great and precious promises to Isaac in a time of famine would preserve him from the fear of perishing, and be more than a balance to present inconveniences. It is not unusual for our heavenly Father to make up the loss of sensible enjoyments by increasing those of faith. We need not mind where we *sojourn*, nor what we endure, if the Lord be *with us and help us.* When Joseph was sold into a strange land, and unjustly cast into prison, it was reckoned a sufficient antidote to add, "But the Lord was with Joseph."

Ver. 6—11. After so extraordinary a manifestation of the Lord's goodness to Isaac, we might have supposed he would have dwelt securely and happily in Gerar: but great mercies are often followed with great *temptations.* The abundance of revelations given to Paul were succeeded by a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan sent to buffet him. It is said of our Lord himself, after the heavens were opened, and the most singular testimony had been borne to him at Jordan, "*Then* was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil." Heavenly enjoyments are given to us in this world, not merely to comfort us under present troubles, but to arm us against future dangers; and happy is it for us if they be so improved.

Isaac had generally lived in solitude; but now he is called into company, and company becomes a snare. "The men of the place asked him of his wife." These questions excited his apprehensions, and put him upon measures of self-preservation that involved him in sin. Observe, 1. He did not sin by thrusting himself into the way of temptation; for he was necessitated and directed of God to go to Gerar. Even the calls of necessity and duty may, if we be not on our watch, prove ensnaring; and, if so, what must those situations be in which we have no call to be found? 2. The temptation of Isaac is the same as that which had overcome his father, and that in two instances. This rendered his conduct the greater sin. The falls of them that have gone before us are so many rocks on which others have split; and the recording of them is like placing buoys over them, for the security of future mariners. 3. It was a temptation that arose from the beauty of Rebecca. There is a vanity which attaches to all earthly good. Beauty has of-

* William's Letters to Belsham, pp. 156—158.

ten been a snare, both to those who possess it and to others. In this case, as in that of Abraham, it put Isaac upon unjustifiable measures for the preservation of his own life; measures that might have exposed his companion to that which would have been worse than death. Man soon falls into mischief when he sets up to be his own guide.

And now we see, what we are grieved to see, a great and good man let down before heathens, and reproved by them for his dissimulation. He had continued at Gerar *a long time* uninterrupted, which sufficiently showed that his fears were groundless; yet he continued to keep up the deception, till the king observed from his window some freedoms he took with Rebecca, from which he inferred that she was his wife. The conduct of Abimelech on this occasion was as worthy of a king as that of Isaac had been unworthy of a servant of God.

Ver. 12—17. Things being thus far rectified, we see Isaac engaged in the primitive employment of husbandry; and the Lord blessed him and increased him, so that he became the envy of the Philistines. Here again we see how vanity attaches to every earthly good: prosperity begets *envy*, and from envy proceeds *injury*. The wells, which Abraham's servants had digged, Isaac considered as his own, and made use of them for his flocks; but the Philistines, out of envy to him, "stopped them up and filled them with earth." Had they drank of them it might have been excused; but to stop them up was downright wickedness, and a gross violation of the treaty of peace which had been made between a former Abimelech and Abraham. The issue was, the king, perceiving the temper of his people, entreated Isaac quietly to depart. The reason he gave for it, that *he was much mightier than they*, might be partly to apologize for his people's jealousy, and partly to soften his spirit by a compliment. If Isaac was so great as was suggested, he might, instead of removing at their request, have disputed it with them; he might have alleged the covenant made with his father, the improvement of his lands, &c. But he was a peaceable man; and therefore, without making words, removed to *the valley of Gerar*, either beyond the borders of Abimelech's territory, or at least farther off from the metropolis. A little with peace and quietness, is better than much with envy and contention.

Ver. 18—22. Isaac, though removed to another part of the country, yet finds "wells of water which had been digged in the days of his father," and which the Philistines had stopped up after his death. It seems, wherever Abraham went, he improved the country; and, wherever the Philistines followed him, their study was to mar his improvements, and that for no other end than the pleasure of doing mischief. Isaac, however, is resolved to open these wells again. Their waters would be doubly sweet to him for their having been first tasted by his beloved father; and, to show his filial affection still more, he called their names after the names by which his father had called them. Many of our enjoyments, both civil and religious, are the sweeter for being the fruits of the labor of our fathers; and, if they have been corrupted by adversaries since their days, we must restore them to their former purity. Isaac's servants also digged "new wells," which occasioned new strife. While we avail ourselves of the labors of our forefathers, we ought not to rest in them without making farther progress, even though it expose us to many unpleasant disputes. *Envy* and *strife* may be expected to follow those whose researches are really beneficial, provided they go a step beyond their forefathers. But let them not be discouraged: the wells of salvation are worth striving for; and, after a few conflicts, they may enjoy the fruits of their labors in peace. Isaac's servants dug two wells, which, from the bitter strife they occasioned, were called Esek and Sitnah, *contention* and *hatred*; but, peaceably removing from these scenes of wrangle, he at length digged a well for which "they strove not." This he called Rehoboth, saying, "Now the Lord hath made *room* for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land."

Ver. 23—25. The famine being now over, Isaac returned to Beersheba, the place where he and his father had lived many years before. It may seem strange, after God had made room for him at Rehoboth, that the next news we hear is that he takes leave of it. This however might be at some distance of time, and Beersheba was to him a kind of home. Here, the very first night he arrived, the Lord appeared to him, probably in vision, saying, "I am the God of Abraham thy father; fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed, for my servant Abraham's sake." Isaac was attached to the wells which his father had digged, and to the place where he had sojourned; and doubtless it would add endearment to the very name of Jehovah himself, that he was the God of Abraham, especially as it would remind him of the covenant which he had made with him. A self-righteous spirit would have been offended at the idea of being blessed *for another's sake;* but he who walked in the steps of his father's faith would enjoy it; and, by how much he loved him for whose sake the blessing was bestow-

ed, by so much would this enjoyment be the greater. The promises are the same for substance as were made to him on his going to Gerar. The same truths are new to us under new circumstances, and in new situations. To express the grateful sense he had of the divine goodness, he arose and "built an altar, and called upon the name of the Lord:" and now, the very place being rendered doubly dear to him, "*there* he pitched his tent, and *there* his servants digged a well." Temporal mercies are sweetened by their contiguity to God's altars, and by their being given us after we have first sought the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

Ver. 26—31. One would not have expected after driving him, in a manner, out of their country, that the Philistines would have had any thing more to say to him. Abimelech, however, and some of his courtiers pay him a visit. They were not easy when he was with them, and now they seem hardly satisfied when he has left them, I believe they were afraid of his growing power, and, conscious that they had treated him unkindly, wished for their own sakes to adjust these differences before they proceeded any farther. Isaac, while they acted as enemies, bore it patiently, as a part of his lot in an evil world; but now they want to be thought friends, and to renew their covenant with him, he feels keenly and speaks his mind. "Wherefore come ye to me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you?" We can bear that from an avowed adversary which we cannot bear from one in habits of friendship. "It was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it." To this they answer, "We saw certainly that the Lord was with thee." Had they any regard, then, for Isaac's God, or for him on that account? I fear they had not: they feel however, a regard to themselves, and a kind of respect for Isaac, which is very commonly seen in men of no religion towards them that fear the Lord. We do not blame them for wishing to be on good terms with such a man as Isaac; but they should not have pretended to have "done unto him nothing but good," when they must know, and he must have felt, the contrary. But this is the very character of a self-righteous heart, when seeking reconciliation with God as well as with man. It palliates its sin, and desires peace in return for its good deeds, when in fact its deeds are evil. Isaac, being of a peaceable spirit, admitted their plea, though a poor one, and treated them generously. Next morning they arose; and, having solemnly renewed covenant with each other, parted in peace.

Ver. 32, 33. The same day in which Abimelech and his courtiers took leave, the news came out of the field that Isaac's servants had discovered a well. It is the same well as they are said in the 25th verse to to have digged; only there the thing is mentioned without respect to the time. Here we are told that the news of the discovery of the well arrived immediately after the mutual oath which had been taken between Isaac and Abimelech, and he for a memorial of the event called it *Sheba*, an *oath;* and a city being afterwards built on the spot, was hence, it seems, called *Beersheba, the well of the oath.* Indeed this name had been given it by Abraham above a hundred years before, and that on a similar occasion; but what was now done would serve to confirm it.

Ver. 34, 35. The Lord had promised to *multiply Isaac's seed*; and they are multiplied in the person of Esau; howbeit not to the increase of comfort either in him or in Rebecca. Esau went into the practice of polygamy, and took both his wives from among the Canaanites. Whether he went into their idolatrous customs we are not told, nor whether they lived in the father's family. However this might be, their ungodly, and some think undutiful behaviour, was a grief of mind to their aged parents. Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife when she bare no children; and, now that they have children grown up, one of them occasions much *bitterness of spirit;* this indeed is not uncommon. Such an issue of things in this instance would tend to turn away the hopes of Isaac from seeing the accomplishment of Abraham's covenant in the person of his first-born son, to whom he appears to have been inordinarily attached. By other instances of the kind, God teaches us to beware of excessive anxiety after earthly comforts, and in receiving them to rejoice with trembling.

DISCOURSE XXXVI.

JACOB'S OBTAINING THE BLESSING.

Gen. xxvii.

Before we entered on the history of Isaac, we met with some painful events respecting the departure of Ishmael; but, in the introduction to the history of Jacob, we find things much more painful. In the former instance, we found him that was rejected a mocker; but in this we see in the heir of promise a supplanter. This deviation from rectitude, though it changes not the divine purpose, but, on the contrary, is overruled for its accomplishment, yet sows the seed of much evil in the life of the offender. Isaac retained his place in the

family; but Jacob was obliged to depart from it. When the former was of age to be married, an honorable embassy was sent to bring it about: but the latter is necessiated to go by himself, as one that had just escaped with his life. There is a deep mystery in the system of providence, and much eventual good brought out of great evils.

Ver. 1—4. Isaac was now about a hundred and thirty-seven years of age, and "his eyes were dim, so that he could not see." He therefore called Esau his eldest son, and said "Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death—take I pray thee thy weapons—and go out to the field, and take me some venison; and make me savory meat, such as I love, and bring it to me that I may eat, that my soul may bless thee before I die." Isaac lived forty-three years after this; but as it was unknown to him, he did very properly in settling his affairs. The day of our death is concealed from us for the very purpose that we may be always ready; and when life is upon the wane, especially, it becomes us to do what we do quickly. The above account, however, does not appear greatly to his honor. His partiality towards Esau would seem to imply a disregard to what had been revealed to Rebecca; and his fondness for the venison has the appearance of weakness.

But, passing this, there are two questions which require an answer—Wherein consisted the blessing which was now about to be bestowed? and why was savory meat required, in order to the bestowment of it? Respecting the first, I might refer to what has been said on the birthright.—Ch. xxv. 29—34. There was, no doubt, a common blessing to be expected from such a father as Isaac on all his children, and a special one on his first-born; but in this family there was a blessing superior to both. It included all those great things contained in the covenant with Abraham, by which his posterity were to be distinguished as God's peculiar people. Hence that which Isaac did is said to have been done *in faith*, and was prophetic of "things to come."—Heb. xi. 20. The faith of this good man was however, at first, much interrupted by natural attachment. Desirous of conferring the blessing on Esau, he gives him directions as to the manner of receiving it. And here occurs the second question, Why was savory meat required in order to the bestowment of the blessing? The design of it seems to have been, not merely to strengthen animal nature, but to enkindle affection. Isaac is said to have *loved* Esau on account of his venison (ch. xxv. 23;) this therefore would tend, as he supposed, to revive that affection, and so enable him to bless him with all his heart. It seems, however, to have been but a carnal kind of introduction to so divine an act; partaking more of the flesh than of the Spirit, and savoring, rather of that natural affection, under the influence of which he at present acted, than of the faith of a son of Abraham.

Ver. 5—10. Rebecca, overhearing this charge of Isaac to his son Esau, takes measures to direct the blessing into another channel. This is a mysterous affair. It was just that Esau should lose the blessing, for by selling his birthright he had despised it. It was God's design too that Jacob should have it. Rebecca also knowing of this design, from its having been revealed to her that the elder should serve the younger, appears to have acted from a good motive. But the scheme which she formed to correct the error of her husband was far from being justifiable. It was one of those crooked measures which have too often been adopted to accomplish the divine promises; as if the end would justify, or at least excuse, the means. Thus Sarah acted in giving Hagar to Abraham; and thus many others have acted, under the idea of being *useful* in promoting the cause of Christ. The answer to all such things is that which God addressed to Abraham: "I AM GOD ALMIGHTY; *walk before me, and be thou perfect.*" The deception practised on Isaac was cruel. If he be in the wrong, endeavor to convince him; or commit the affair to God, who could turn his mind, as he afterwards did that of Jacob, when blessing Ephraim and Manasseh: but do not avail yourself of his loss of sight to deceive him. Such would have been the counsel of wisdom and rectitude: but Rebecca follows her own.

Ver. 11—13. We ought not to load Jacob with more of the guilt of this transaction than belongs to him. He was not first in the transgression. His feelings revolted at it when it was proposed to him. He remonstrated against it. Considering too that it was against the advice, or rather the command, of a parent, such remonstrance would seem to go far towards excusing him. But no earthly authority can justify us in disregarding the authority of God. Moreover the remonstrance itself is founded merely on the *consequences* of the evil, and not on *the evil itself.* What a difference between this reasoning and that of his son Joseph! "I shall bring a curse upon me," said he, "and not a blessing." "How can I do this great wickedness," said the other, "and sin against God?" The *resoluteness* of Rebecca is affecting. "Upon me be thy curse, my son: only obey my voice." Surely she must have presumed upon the divine promise, which is a

dangerous thing: our Lord considered it as tempting God.—Matt. iv. 7. Those who do evil under an idea of serving God, commonly go to the greatest lengths. It was in this track that the Lord met Saul in his way to Damascus.

Ver. 14—17. If Jacob's remonstrance had arisen from an aversion to the evil, he would not so readily have yielded to his mother as he did: but, to resist temptation with merely the calculation of consequences, is doing nothing. Rebecca takes the consequences upon herself, and then he has no more to object, but does as she instructs him. She also performs her part; and thus between them the scheme is executed. What labor and contrivance are required to dissemble the truth and carry on a bad cause! Uprightness needs no such circuitous measures.

Ver. 18—24. Jacob now enters upon the business. And first, with all the artifice of his mother, she cannot guard him at all points. He is obliged to *speak*, and he could not counterfeit his brother's voice. "My father," said he: the patriarch starts . . . . . "Who art thou, my son?" It was the voice of one of his sons, but not of him whom he expected. And now what can Jacob answer? He must either confess the deception, or persist in it at all events. He chooses the latter. One sin makes way for another, and in a manner impels us to commit it: "Jacob said, I am Esau thy first-born—I have done according as thou badest me—Arise, I pray thee, sit, and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me." Isaac still suspicious, inquires how he came so soon. The answer intimates that by a special interposition of his father's God he had met with early success! It is not easy to conceive of any thing more wicked than this. It was bad enough to deal in so many known falsehoods: but to bring in the Lord God of his father, in order to give them the appearance of truth, was much worse, and what we should not have expected but from one of the worst of men. There is something about falsehood which though it may silence, yet will not ordinarily satisfy. Isaac is yet suspicious, and therefore desires to feel his hands; and here the deception answered. The hands, he thinks, are Esau's; but still it is mysterious, for *the voice is Jacob's*. Were it not for some such things as these we might overlook the wisdom and goodness of God in affording us so many marks by which to detect imposture, and distinguish man from man. Of all the multitude of faces, voices, and figures in the world, no two are perfectly alike: and, if one sense fail us, the others are frequently improved. Such was the strength of Isaac's doubts, that he would not be satisfied without directly asking him again, "Art thou my very son Esau?" and receiving for answer "I am." After this he seems to have thought that it must be Esau, and therefore proceeded to bless him.

The adversaries of revelation may make the most they can of these narrations; evil as was the conduct of Jacob and of Rebecca, the history of it contains the strongest internal evidence that it is written by inspiration of God. Had it been a cunningly devised fable, it would have been the business of the writer to have thrown the faults of this his great ancestor into the shade: but the Scriptures do not profess to describe perfect characters: they represent men and things as they were. We feel for the imposition practiced on Isaac; and yet it was no doubt a chastisement to him for his ill-placed partiality for Esau, on grounds so unworthy of him, and to the disregarding of what God had revealed concerning them.

Ver. 25—29. It was of the Lord that Jacob should have the blessing, notwithstanding the unwarrantable means he had used to obtain it. In pronouncing it, Isaac was supernaturally directed; otherwise it would not have corresponded with what afterwards actually befel his posterity, which it manifestly does; nor would he have felt himself unable to revoke it. It is observable, however, that the blessing is expressed in very general terms. No mention is made of those distinguishing mercies included in the covenant with Abraham; and this might be owing to his having Esau in his mind, though it was Jacob who was before him. He could not be ignorant how that young man had despised these things, and this might be a check to his mind while he thought he was blessing him. Moreover, his attachment to Esau, to the disregard of the mind of God, must have greatly weakened and injured his own faith in these things: it might therefore be expected that the Lord would cause a comparative leanness to attend his blessing, corresponding with the state of his mind.

Ver. 30—33. Jacob had scarcely left the room when Esau, returning from the chase, enters it, and presents his father with his venison. This at once discovers the imposition. Isaac is greatly affected by it. At first, when he heard his voice, he was confounded: "Who art thou?" And when he perceived that it was indeed his first-born son, Esau, he "trembled very exceedingly," and said, "Who, where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it to me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him?" Such a shock must have been more than he knew how to sustain. To ascertain the sensations of which it was composed, we must place ourselves in his situation. As an

aged and afflicted man, the imposition which had been practised on him would excite his *indignation.* Yet a moment's reflection would convince him that the transfer of the blessing must have been *of the Lord;* and, consequently, that he had all along been acting against his will in seeking to have it otherwise. Two such considerations rushing upon his mind in the same instant sufficiently account for all his feelings: it was to him like a place where two seas met, or as the union of subterraneous fires and waters, the commotion of which causeth the earth to tremble. It must have appeared to him as a strong measure, permitted of God for his correction; and that he had thus caused him to do that against his choice which should have been done with it. Viewing it in this light, and knowing the blessing to be irrevocable, he, like a good man, acquiesced in the will of God, saying, "Yea, and he shall be blessed."

Ver. 34—40. The *very exceeding trembling* of Isaac is now followed by "a great and exceeding bitter cry" on the part of Esau. Nothing he had ever met with seems to have affected him like it. But how is it that he who made so light of the birthright, as to part with it for a morsel of meat, should now make so much of the blessing connected with it? It was not that he desired to be a servant of the Lord, or that his posterity should be his people, according to the tenor of Abraham's covenant; but, as he that should be possessed of these distinctions would *in other respects* be superior to his brother, it became an object of emulation. Thus we have often seen religion set at nought, while yet the advantages which accompany it have been earnestly desired; and where grace has in a manner crossed hands, by favoring a younger or inferior branch of a family, envy, and its train of malignant passions, have frequently blazed on the other side. It was not as the father of the holy nation, but as being "lord over his brethren," that Jacob was the object of Esau's envy. And this may farther account for the blessing of Isaac on the former dwelling principally upon *temporal advantages,* as designed of God to cut off the vain hopes of the latter of enjoying the *power* attached to the blessing, while he despised the blessing itself.

When Esau perceived that Jacob must be blessed, he entreated to be blessed also: "Bless me, even me also, O my father!" One sees in this language just that partial conviction of there being something in religion, mixed with a large portion of ignorance, which it is common to see in persons who have been brought up in a religious family, and yet are strangers to the God of their fathers. If this earnest request had extended only to what was consistent with Jacob's having the pre-eminence, there *was* another blessing for him, and he had it: but though he had no desire after the best part of Jacob's portion, yet he was very earnest to have had that clause of it reversed, "Be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee." If this could have been granted him, he had been satisfied; for "the fatness of the earth" was all he cared for. But this was an object concerning which, as the apostle observes, "he found no place of repentance" (that is, in the mind of his father,) though he sought it carefully with tears." Such will be the case with fornicators, and all profane persons, who, like Esau, for a few momentary gratifications in the present life, make light of Christ, and the blessings of the gospel. They will cry with a great and exceedingly bitter cry, saying, "Lord, Lord, open unto us!" But they will find no place of repentance in the mind of the Judge, who will answer them, "I know you not whence ye are: depart from me, ye workers of iniquity."

Esau's reflections on his brother for having twice supplanted him, were not altogether without ground: yet his statement is exaggerated. It was not accurate to say "He took away my birthright," as though he had robbed him of it, seeing he himself had so despised it as to part with it for a morsel of meat: and, having done so, whatever might be said of Jacob's conduct in the sight of God, *he* had no reason to complain.

Ver. 41. Esau obtained, as we have seen, a blessing, and some relief on the score of subjection; yet, because he could not gain his point, but the posterity of Jacob must needs have the ascendancy, there is nothing left for him but to "hate him for the blessing wherewith his father blessed him." He was not ignorant of Isaac's partiality; he must therefore have known that it was not owing to him, nor even to Jacob's subtilty, that the first dominion was given him. He must have perceived, from what his father had said, that the thing *was of the Lord,* and therefore could not be reversed. Hence it appears that the hatred of Esau was of the same nature with that of Cain to Abel, and of Saul to David; and operated in the same way: it was directed against him principally on account of his having been an object whom the Lord had favored. Such also was the motive of hatred which in after ages, subsisted in the Edomites against Israel. As nothing could comfort Esau but the hope of murder, so nothing could satisfy his posterity but to see Jerusalem razed to its foundations. Isaac had talked of dying, and Esau thought to be sure the time was not far distant; and then, during the days of mourning for his father, he hoped for an opportunity of mur-

dering his brother. He might think also that it was best to suppress his resentment till the poor old man was dead, and then it would not be a grief to him. The most cruel designs of wicked men may be mixed with a partiality for those who have been partial to them.

Ver. 42—45, Esau, it seems, had not only *said in his heart* I will slay my brother, but had put his thought into words, probably before some of the servants. The hint, however, was carried to Rebecca, and she clearly foresaw what was to be expected. She therefore sent for Jacob, and told him of his brother's design, counselling him at the same time to go to her relations at Haran, and tarry there awhile, till Esau's anger should have subsided. The reason which she urges to enforce her counsel is very strong: "Why should I be deprived of you both in one day?" Had Esau's purpose succeeded, the murderer, as well as the murdered, had been lost to her. We see here the bitter fruits which Rebecca begins to reap from her crooked policy: she must part with her favorite son to preserve his life, and will never see him again in this world, though she thinks of sending in a little time to fetch him home.

Ver. 46. By the manner in,which things are here related, it appears that Isaac was so infirm as to have lost all the power of management, and that the whole in a manner devolved on Rebecca. She advises Jacob what to do: it is expedient, if not necessary, however, before he takes his departure, to obtain his father's concurrence. She does not choose to tell her husband the true reason of her wishes, as that was a tender point, and might lead to a subject which she might think it better to pass over in silence; but, knowing that he as well as herself had been grieved with Esau's wives (chap. xxv. 35,) she judges that the most likely means of success would be a proposal for Jacob to go to Haran for the purpose of taking a wife from among their relations in that country: She does not propose it, however, directly, but merely expresses her strong disapprobation of his following the example of his brother, leaving it to Isaac to mention positively what should be done. And this, her apparent modesty, answered the end, as we shall see in the following chapter.

DISCOURSE XXXVII.

JACOB'S DEPARTURE FROM BEERSHEBA.

Gen. xxviii.

Ver. 1—4. The hint which Rebecca had dropped against Jacob's taking a wife from among the daughters of Heth quite fell in with Isaac's mind; and, knowing that there was but one place for him to go to on such an errand, he determines without delay to send him thither. The account here given of his *calling*, *blessing*, and *charging* him, is very much to his honor. The first of these terms implies his reconciliation to him; the second, his satisfaction in what had been done before without design; and the last, his concern that he should act in a manner worthy of the blessing which he had received. How differently do things issue in different minds! Esau, as well as Isaac, was exceedingly affected by what had lately occurred: but the *bitter cry* of the one issued in a settled hatred, while the *trembling* of the other brought him to a right mind. He had been thinking matters over ever since, and the more he thought of them the more satisfied he was that it was the will of God, and that all his private partialities should give place to it.

One sees in what he now does that his heart is in it. He not only blesses him, but invokes the blessing of Almighty God to attend him: "God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people; and give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee, that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham." Who does not perceive the difference between this blessing and the former? In that he was thinking of one person and blessing another; in this he understands what he is about. Then his mind was straitened by carnal attachment: now it is enlarged by faith. The rich promises of Abraham's covenant seem there to have been almost forgotten; but here they are expressly named, and dwelt upon with delight. Of what importance is it for our minds to keep one with God's mind; and what a difference it makes in the discharge of duty! We may pray, or preach, after a manner, while it is otherwise; and God may preserve us from uttering gross error: but what we deliver will be miserably flat and defective in comparison of what it is when a right spirit is renewed within us.

Ver. 5–9. The departure of Jacob was attended by many painful and humiliating circumstances, as well it might; for these are the necessary consequences of sin. The parting scene to Isaac was tender; but Jacob and his mother must have felt something more than tenderness. As to Esau, it is not likely that he was present. He was near enough, however, to eye his motions, and by some means to make himself acquainted with every thing that passed. Probably he expected more supplanting

schemes were forming, and longed for the time when a fair opportunity should offer for his being revenged on the supplanter. But when he found that his father had blessed him, and charged him not to take a wife of the daughters of Canaan, and that he had obeyed his voice, and was gone to Padan-aram, it seems to have wrought in a way that we should scarcely have expected. Finding himself left in the possesion of all the substance of the family, and Jacob out of his way, he thinks he has now only to please his father, and, notwithstanding the loss of his birthright and blessing, all will be his. And now, to accomplish his end, he carefully notices the means by which Jacob succeeded in pleasing his parents. One great advantage which he had gained over him, as he perceived by his father's *charge*, was in reference to marriage. He had obeyed the voice of his father and his mother, and was gone to take a wife from the family of Bethuel. I will take another wife, then, said Esau to himself, if that will please them; and as they seem attached to their *relations*, it shall be from among them. Moreover, as Jacob, who is his mother's favorite, intends to marry into her family, I, who am my father's will marry into his. See what awkward work is made when men go about to please others and promote their worldly interest, by imitating that in which they have no delight. Ignorance and error mark every step they take. Esau was in no need of a wife, for he had two already; nor did his parents desire him to add to the number; nor would they be gratified by his connexion with the apostate family of Ishmael; nor was it principally on account of Bethuel's being a *relation* that Abraham's family took wives from his. In short, he is out in all his calculations; nor can he discover the principles which influence those who fear the Lord. Thus have we often seen men try to imitate religious people, for the sake of gaining esteem, or in some way promoting their selfish ends: but, instead of succeeding, they have commonly made bad worse. That which to a right mind is as plain as the most public highway, to a mind perverted shall appear full of difficulties "The labor of the foolish wearieth every one of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city." But to return:—

Ver. 10, 11. The line of promise being now fully ascertained, Jacob becomes the hero of the tale. He was now about seventy-seven years old; and though his brother Esau had two wives, yet he was single. The posterity of Ishmael and Esau increased much faster than those of Isaac and Jacob. It seemed to be the design of God that the fulfilment of the promise should be protracted in order to try the faith of his servants. Setting out from his father's house at Beersheba, we find Jacob journeying towards Haran, a distance of about five hundred miles. Without a servant to attend him, or a beast to carry him, or any other accommodation, except, as he afterwards informs us, *a staff* to walk with, he pursues his solitary way. Having travelled one whole day, the sun being set, he alighted on a certain place, where he took up his abode for the night. The place was called Luz, and is said to have been *a city*.—Ver. 19. Jacob, however, does not seem to have entered it: but, for some reason, chose to sleep in the open air in its suburbs. Sleeping abroad is a custom very common in the East, and less dangerous than in colder climates. The stones which he used for a pillow might preserve him from the damp of the ground; but, we should think, must have contributed but little to rest his weary body.

Ver. 12—15. During the night he had a very extraordinary dream, almost every particular of which is introduced by the sacred witer with the interjection "*Behold!*"

We might have been at a loss in ascertaining the meaning of the ladder, if the great medium of communion between heaven and earth had not almost expressly applied it to himself. "Hereafter," said Jesus to Nathanael, "ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending (that is to heaven) and descending (that is to the earth) upon the Son of Man." Our Lord's design appears to have been to foretell the glory of gospel times, in which, through his mediation, heaven should as it were be opened, and a free intercourse be established between God, angels, and men. But, it may be asked, What analogy could there be between this and that which was revealed to Jacob? I answer, We have seen that the Messiah was not only included in the promises to Abraham, but that he made a principal part of them; and as these promises were now renewed to Jacob, though we had read nothing of his vision of the ladder, yet we should have known that they looked as far forward as to him, and to that dispensation in which "all the families of the earth should be blessed" in him. As it is, we may conclude that what was *seen* in vision was of the same general import as what was *heard* in the promises which followed. It was giving the patriarch a glimpse of that glory which he accomplished in his seed.

There was something very *seasonable* in this vision, and in the promises which accompanied it. Jacob had lately acted an unworthy part, and, if properly sensible of it, must have been very unhappy. His father, it is true, had blessed him, and of course forgiven him; but, till God has done

so too, he can enjoy no solid peace. Now such was the present vision: it was the Lord his God saying Amen to his father's blessing.—Ver. 3, 4, with 13, 14. He was taking leave of Canaan, and, if he had calculated on human probabilities, he was never likely to return to it, at least during the life-time of Esau: but by the gift of the land on which he lay to him and to his seed, he was taught to expect it, and to consider himself only as a sojourner at Haran. Considering his age, too there seemed but little probability of his having a numerous offspring. If the blessing consisted in this, it seemed much more likely to be fulfilled in his brother than in him: but he was hereby assured that his seed should be as the dust of the earth, spreading abroad in every direction. The thought also of leaving his father's house, and of going among strangers, must needs have affected him. during his solitary walk from Beersheba he had doubtless been thinking of his lonely condition, and of the difficulties and dangers which he had to encounter. How seasonable then was the promise, "Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land!" Finally, the present is a new epoch in his life, and, as an heir of promise, a kind of commencement of it. In this character he must, like his predecessors, live by faith. Esau's blessing was soon fulfilled; but Jacob's related to things at a great distance, which none but *God Almighty* could bring to pass. How seasonable then were those precious promises which furnished at his outset a ground for faith to rest upon! "I will not leave thee till I have done that which I have spoken to thee of."

Ver. 16—22. Awaking from sleep in the night-time, and reflecting on his dream, he was greatly affected, as well he might. "Surely," exclaimed he, "Jehovah is in this place, and I knew it not!" And he was afraid, and said, "How dreadful is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of Heaven!" As if he had said, Surely this is no common dream! God is in it! God is near! I went to sleep as at other times, expecting nothing; and lo, ere I was aware, God hath visited me! Feeling himself as in the presence of the Divine Majesty, he trembles; the place seems to be holy ground, the temple of Jehovah, the suburbs of heaven! Whether he slept after this we are not told: be that as it may, he "rose early in the morning; and, deeply impressed with what had passed, resolved to perpetuate the remembrance of it. Taking the stone upon which he had lain, he set it up for a pillar, or monument; and that he might consecrate it to the future service of the Lord, "poured oil upon the top of it." This done, he gave the place a new name. Instead of *Luz* (probably so called on account of a number of *almond* or *nut* trees growing near it,) he called it "Bethel—the house ofGod."

Finally: he closed this extraordinary vision by a solemn vow, or dedication of himself to God. The *terms* of this solemn vow were not of Jacob's dictating to the Almighty, but arose out of his own gracious promises; and so furnish a lovely example of the prayer of faith. God had promised to be with him, to keep him, to bring him again into the land, and not to leave him. Jacob takes up the precious words, saying, "If God will thus be with me, and keep me, and provide for me, and bring me home in peace, then in return I will be his forever. We may pray for things which God hath not promised *in submission to his will*, as Abraham interceded for Sodom, and Moses for the idolaters at Horeb; but, when we ask for that which he hath engaged to bestow, we approach him with much greater encouragement. The *order* of what he desired is also deserving of notice. It corresponds with our Saviour's rule, to seek things of the greatest importance first. By how much God's favor is better than life, by so much his being *with us*, and *keeping us*, is better than food and raiment. A sense of this will moderate our desires for inferior things, as it did Jacob's. A little with the fear of the Lord is better than great treasures with trouble. If God be with us, and keep us, the mere necessaries of life will make us happy. The *vow itself* contains an entire renunciation of idolatry, and a taking Jehovah to be his God. And, inasmuch as it looks forward to his return to Canaan, it includes a solemn promise to maintain the worship of God in his family. Then he would rear an altar to him in Bethel, and consecrate the tenth of all his substance to his cause.

In the course of the history we shall perceive the use that Jacob made of this vision, and that which the Lord made of the vow which here he vowed to him. But I conclude with only remarking that in the former chapter we saw much of man; but in this we have seen much of God. In the works of the one, sin abounded; in those of the other, grace hath much more abounded.

DISCOURSE XXXVIII.

JACOB'S ARRIVAL AT HARAN.

Gen. xxix.

VER. 1. Jacob's second day's journey was very different from the first; then he had a heavy burden, but now he has lost it. His outset from Bethel is expressed by a phrase which signifies he *lifted up his feet;* that is, he went lightly and cheerfully on. Nothing more is recorded of his journey, but that "he came into the land of the people of the east."

Ver. 2—10. The first object that struck him was a well, with three flocks of sheep lying by it, ready to be watered. The shepherds coming up rolled away the stone from the well's mouth, watered the flocks, and then put the stone again in its place. Jacob, who had hitherto looked on, now began the following conversation with them.—My brethren, whence be ye?—Of Haran.—Know ye Laban, the son of Nahor?—We know him.—Is he well?—He is well; and, behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep.—On this Jacob suggests that it was too soon to gather all the flocks together as they did at night; and that there was much time for their being again led forth to pasture. "Water ye the sheep," said he "and go and feed them." It might appear somewhat out of character for a stranger to be so officious as to direct them how to proceed with their flocks: but the design was, I apprehend, to induce them to depart, and to leave him to converse with Rachel by herself. They tell him, however, that they must stop till all the flocks are watered; Rachel's, it seems, as well as the rest. Such probably was the custom, that the well might be left secure. While they were talking, Rachel came up. The sight of the daughter of his mother's brother affected Jacob. He could have wished that so tender an interview had been by themselves: but, as this could not be, he, in the presence of the shepherds, went and "rolled away the stone from the well's mouth and watered her flock;" which being done, he "kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice and wept." The tears shed on this occasion must have arisen from a full heart. We cannot say that the love which he afterwards bore to Rachel did not commence from his first seeing her. But, however that might be, the cause of this weeping was of another kind: it was her being "the daughter of his *mother's* brother" that now affected him. Every thing that revived *her* memory, even the very flocks of sheep that belonged to *her* brother, went to his heart. Nor did he wish to be alone with Rachel, but that he might give vent without reserve to these sensations.

Ver. 12—14. It must have excited surprise in Rachel's mind to see a stranger so attentive in watering her flock, and still more so to receive from him so affectionate a salutation; but now, having relieved his heart by a burst of weeping, he tells her who he is;—he is her father's near kinsman, Rebecca's son! And now we may expect another very tender interview. Rachel ran and told her father; and the father "ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kissed him, and brought him to his house." After an interchange of salutations, Jacob tells him his whole story; and Laban seems much affected with it, and speaks to him in affectionate language, "Surely, thou art my bone and my flesh."

Ver. 15—20. During the first month of his stay, Jacob employed himself about his uncle's business; but nothing was said with respect to terms. On such a subject it was not for Jacob to speak: so Laban very properly intimated that he did not desire to take advantage of his near relationship, that he should serve him any more than another man for nothing. Tell me, said he, what shall be thy wages. This gives Jacob an opportunity of expressing his love to Rachel. Aware that he had no dowry, like his father Isaac, he could not well have asked her, but for such an opportunity as this being offered him. It was humiliating, however, to be thus in a manner obliged to earn his wife before he could have her. This is twice afterwards referred to in the Scriptures, as an instance of his low condition. It was a part of the confession required to be made by every Israelite, when he presented his basket of first-fruits before the Lord. "A Syrian, *ready to perish*, was my father!" And when, in the days of Hosea, they were grown haughty, the prophet reminds them that "Jacob *fled* into the country of Syria, and Israel *served* for a wife, and for a wife he *kept sheep*." Half the generosity which Laban's words seem to express would have given Jacob the object of his choice, without making him wait seven years for her, It was very proper for the one to offer it; but it was mean and selfish for the other to accept it. If he had really esteemed his daughters, and on this account set a high value on them, he would not afterwards have imposed two, where only one was desired. But his own private interest was all he studied. In his sister Rebecca's marriage there were presents of gold and silver, and costly raiment, besides an assurance of the Lord having greatly blessed the family, and that Isaac was to be the *heir*. These were things which wrought much on Laban's mind. He could then say, "Behold, Re-

becca is before thee, take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife." But here are none of these moving inducements. Here is a man it is true, and he *talks* of promised blessings: but he is poor, and Laban cannot live upon promises. He perceives that Abraham's descendants are partial to his family, and he is resolved to make his market of it. The sight of the very flocks of Laban, as being his *mother's* brother, interested Jacob's heart; but he would soon find that Laban will make him pay for his attachments. Such, however, was the love he bore to Rachel that he took all in good part, and consented to *serve* seven years for her. Nay, such was the strength of his affection, that "they seemed unto him but a few days." Some would suppose that love must operate in a contrary way, causing the time to appear long rather than short; and therefore conclude that what is here spoken is expressive of what it appeared *when it was past;* but the phraseology seems rather to denote what it appeared *at the time.* The truth seems to be this: when there is nothing to obstruct a union, love is impatient of delay; but, when great difficulties interpose, it stimulates to a patient and resolute course of action, in order to surmount them. Where the object is highly valued, we think little of the labor and expense of obtaining it. "Love endureth all things."

Ver. 21—24. At the expiration of the time Jacob demanded his wife, and preparation is made accordingly for the marriage. Laban, like some in their gifts to God, is not wanting in ceremony. He *made a feast*, gave his daughter a handmaid, and went through all the forms; but the gift itself was a deception: it was not Rachel, but Leah, that was presented. It seems somewhat extraordinary that Jacob should be capable of being thus imposed upon. Perhaps the veil which was then worn by a woman on her marriage might contribute to his not perceiving her. It was a cruel business on the part of Laban; yet Jacob might see in it the punishment of his having imposed upon his father. In such a way God often deals with men, causing them to reap the bitter fruits of sin, even when they have lamented and forsaken it. "When thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee."

Ver. 25—30. Jacob, perceiving by the light of the morning, how he had been deceived, remonstrated; but it was to no purpose. The answer of Laban was frivolous. If the custom of the country was as he alleged, he ought to have said so from the first: but it is manifest that he wanted to dispose of both his daughters in a way that might turn to his own advantage. Hence he adds, "Fulfil her week, and I will give thee this also." These words would seem to intimate that he had seven years longer to stay for Rachel; but this does not agree with other facts. Jacob was twenty years in Haran—ch. xxxi. 41. At the end of fourteen years Joseph was born. At which time Rachel had been a wife, without bearing any children, for several years—xxx. 22—25. The two marriages therefore must have been within a week of each other; and the meaning of Laban's words must be, Fulfil the seven days feasting for Leah, and then thou shalt have Rachel, and shalt serve me seven years after the marriage on her account.—With this perfectly agrees what is said in ver. 30, in which he is said to have gone in *also* unto Rachel, denoting that it was soon after his having gone in unto Leah; and in which the seven years' service is spoken of as following his marriage to her. This proposal on the part of Laban was as void of principle as any thing could well be. His first agreement was ungenerous, his breach of it unjust; and now to extort seven years' more labor, or withhold the object agreed for, was sordid in the extreme. Jacob had no desire for more wives than one: yet as polygamy was at that time tolerated, and as the marriage had been consummated, though ignorantly, with Leah, he could not well put her away: yet neither could he think of foregoing Rachel. So he acceded to the terms, notwithstanding their injustice, and was married also to Rachel; and Bilhah was given to her for a handmaid. But it was to him a sore trial, and that which laid the foundation of innumerable discords in his family, of which the succeeding history of it abounds. The following prohibition to Israel seems to have been occasioned by this unhappy example in their great ancestor: "Thou shalt not take a wife to her sister, to vex her, to uncover her nakedness, besides the other, in her life-time."

Ver. 31—35. That Leah, who was never the object of Jacob's choice, and who must have had a share in the late imposition, should be *hated* in comparison of Rachel, is no more than might be expected: yet it is worthy of notice how God balances the good and ill of the present life. Leah is slighted in comparison of Rachel: but God gives children to her, while he withholds them from the other; and children in a family whose chief blessing consisted in a promised *seed*, were greatly accounted of. The names given to the children were expressive of their mother's state of mind; partly as to her affliction for want of an interest in her husband's heart, and partly, we hope, as to her piety, in viewing the hand of God in all that befel her. Four children were born of her successively;

namely, Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah: and thus God was pleased to put more abundant honor upon the part that lacked, The name of the last of these children, though given him by his mother merely under an emotion of thankfulness, yet was not a little suited to the royal tribe, whence also the Messiah should descend. Of this his father was made acquainted by revelation when he blessed his sons. "Judah," said he, "thou art he whom thy brethren shall PRAISE—the sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be!"

One sees, in the conduct of both Jacob and Leah, under their afflictions, a portion of that patience which arose from a consciousness of their having brought them upon themselves. They were each buffeted in this manner for their faults; and, being so, there was less of praiseworthiness in their taking it patiently. Yet, when compared with some others, who, in all their troubles, are as bullocks unaccustomed to the yoke, we see what is worthy of imitation.

DISCOURSE XXXIX.

JACOB IN HARAN.

Gen. xxx.; xxxi. 1—16

THOUGH every part of Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for various purposes, yet I conceive it is no disparagement from its real value to say that every particular passage in it is not suited for a public exposition. On this ground I shall pass over the thirtieth chapter, with only two or three general remarks.

First: The domestic discords, envies, and jealousies, between Jacob's wives, serve to teach us the wisdom and goodness of the Christian law, that every man have his own wife, as well as every woman her own husband. No reflecting person can read this chapter without being disgusted with polygamy, and thankful for that dispensation which has restored the original law of nature, and, with it, true conjugal felicity.

Secondly: Though the strifes and jealousies of Jacob's wives were disgusting, yet we are not to attribute their desire of children, or the measures which it put them upon for obtaining them, to mere carnal motives. Had it been so, there is no reason to believe that the inspired writer would have condescended to narrate them. "It would," as an able writer observes, "have been below the dignity of such a sacred history as this is to relate such things, if there had not been something of greater consideration in them." The truth appears to be, they were influenced by the promises of God to Abraham: on whose posterity were entailed the richest blessings, and from whom the Messiah was, in the fullness of time, to descend. It was the belief of these promises that rendered every pious female in those times emulous of being a mother. Hence also both Leah and Rachael are represented as praying to God for this honor, and, when children were given them, as acknowledging the favor to have proceeded from him.—Ver. 17, 18, 22.

Thirdly: The measure which Jacob took to obtain the best of the cattle would at first sight appear to be selfish and disingenuous; and if viewed as a mere human device, operating according to the established laws of nature, it would be so: but such it was not. As, when unbelievers object to the curse of Noah upon his son that it was the mere effect of revenge, we answer, Let them curse those who displease them, and see whether any such effects will follow; so, if they object to the conduct of Jacob as a crafty device, we might answer, Let them make use of the same if they be able. I believe it will not be pretended that any other person has since made the like experiment with success. It must therefore have been by a special direction of God that he acted as he did.—xxxi. 10—12. And this will acquit him of selfishness, in the same manner as the divine command to the Israelites to borrow of the Egyptians acquits them of fraud. Both were extraordinary interpositions in behalf of the injured; a kind of divine reprisal, in which justice was executed on a broad scale. And as the Egyptians could not complain of the Israelites, for that they had freely lent or rather given them their jewels, without any expectation of receiving them again; so neither could Laban complain of Jacob, for that he had nothing more than it was freely agreed he should have; nor was he on the whole injured, but greatly benefitted by Jacob's services.

Chap. xxxi. 1, 2. It is time for Jacob to depart; for though Laban has acknowledged, in the hope of detaining him, that the Lord had *blessed him for his sake*,, yet there is at this time much envy and evil-mindedness at work in the family against him, overlooking all their gains, and dwelling only upon his. Mercenary characters are not contented to prosper with others, but think much of everything that goes beside themselves. If a poor tenant or a servant thrive under them, they will soon be heard murmuring, "He hath taken away all that was ours, and of that which was ours hath he gotten all this glory." If Laban's sons only had murmured thus, Jacob might have borne it; but their father was

of the same mind, and carried it thus unkindly towards him. He had been very willing to part with his daughters, more so indeed than he ought to have been; but Jacob's increase of cattle under him touches him in a tender part.

Ver. 3. The Lord had promised to be with Jacob, and to keep him in all places whither he went; and he makes good his promise. Like a watchful friend at his right hand, he observes his treatment, and warns him to depart. If Jacob had removed from mere personal resentment, or as stimulated only by a sense of injury, he might have sinned against God, though not against Laban. But when it was said to him, "Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred, and I will be with thee," his way was plain before him. In all our removals, it becomes us so to act as that we may hope for the divine presence and blessing to attend us; else, though we may flee from one trouble, we shall fall into many, and be less able to endure them.

Ver. 4—13. And now, being warned of God to depart, he sends for his wives into the field, where he might converse with them freely on the subject, without danger of being overheard. Had they been servants, it had been sufficient to have imparted to them his will; but, being wives,, they require a different treatment. There is an authority which Scripture and nature give to the man over the woman; but every one who deserves the name of a man will exercise it with a gentleness and kindness that shall render it pleasant rather than burdensome. He will consult with her as a friend, and satisfy her by giving the reasons of his conduct. Thus did Jacob to both his wives, who, by such kind conduct, forgot the differences between themselves, and cheerfully cast in their lot with him.

The reasons assigned for leaving were partly the treatment of Laban, and partly the intimations from God. "I see your father's countenance," says he, "that it is not toward me as before." It is wisely ordered that the countenance shall, in most cases, be an index to the heart; else there would be much more deception in the world than there is. We gather more of men's disposition towards us from looks than from words; and domestic happiness is more influenced by the one than by the other. Sullen silence is often less tolerable than contention itself, because the latter, painful as it is, affords opportunity for mutual explanation. But, while Jacob had to complain of Laban's cloudy countenance, he could add, "The God of my father hath been with me." God's smiles are the best support under man's frowns: if we walk in the light of his countenance, we need not fear what man can do unto us. He then appeals to his wives, as to the faithfulness and diligence with which he had served their father, and the deceitful treatment he had met with in return. "Ye know that with all my power I have served your father; and your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times." Next he alleges the good hand of his God upon him, that he had not suffered him to hurt him; but, in whatever form his wages were to be, had caused things in the end to turn to his account; and that the purport of this was revealed to him by a dream before it came to pass, in which he saw the cattle in those colors which were to distinguish them as his hire. Moreover, that he had very lately had another dream,* in which the Angel of God directed him to observe the fact as accomplished, of which he had before received only a pre-intimation; and accounted for it, saying, "I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee." In alleging these things in his defence, Jacob said, in effect, "If your father's cattle have of late been given to me, it is not my doing but God's, who hath seen my wrongs, and redressed them." Finally: he alleges as the grand reason of his departure, the command of God. The same Angel who had directed him to observe the accomplishment of his former dream, at the same time added, "I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar, and vowedst a vow unto me: now arise, get thee out of this land, and return unto the land of thy kindred."

Let us pause, and observe with attention this important passage. "I am the God of Bethel!" Such words could never have been uttered by a created angel: nor does the appearing in the form of an angel, or messenger, accord with the Scripture account of God the Father: it must therefore have been the Son of God, whose frequent appearances to the patriarchs afforded a prelude to his incarnation. Paul, speaking of Christ in his incarnate character, says, that "being in the form of God, he thought it not robbery to be equal with God." But to what does the apostle refer? When or where had he appeared equal with God? In such instances as these, no doubt; wherein he constantly spoke of himself, and was spoken to by his servants, *as God;* and in a manner which evinces that he accounted it *no usurpation* of that which did not belong to him.

"I am the God of Bethel!" When at Bethel, the Lord said, "I am Jehovah, God of Abraham thy father and the God of Isaac." He might have said the same now; but it

* I am aware that the dreams in verses 10, 11, are generally considered as one and the same. But those who thus consider them are not only obliged to interpret those as one which the text represents as two; but what is said by the angel in the 12th and 13th verses as two speeches which manifestly appears to be one.

was his pleasure to direct the attention of his servant to the *last* and to him the most interesting of his manifestations. By giving him hold of the last link in the chain, he would be in possession of the whole. The God of Bethel was the God of his fathers, Abraham and Isaac; the God who had entered into covenant with the former, had renewed it with the latter, and again renewed it with him. What satisfaction must it afford to be directed by such a God!

It is also observable that in directing Jacob's thoughts to the vision at Bethel, the Lord reminds him of those *solemn acts* of his own by which he had at that time *devoted* himself to him. "I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar, and vowedst a vow unto me." It is not only necessary that we be reminded of God's promises for our support in troubles, but of our own solemn engagements, that the same affections which distinguished the best seasons of our life may be renewed, and that in all our movements we may keep in view the end for which we live. The object of the vow was that *Jehovah should be his God;* and, whenever he should return, that *that stone should be God's house.* And, now that the Lord commands him to return, he reminds him of his vow. He must not go to Canaan with a view to promote his own temporal interest, but to introduce the knowledge and worship of the true God. This was the great end which Jehovah had in view in all that he did for Abraham's posterity, and they must never lose sight of it.

Ver. 14—16. Jacob having given the reasons for his proposed departure, paused. The women, without any hesitation, acquiesce, intimating that there was nothing in their father's house that should induce them to wish to stay in it. It is grievous to see the ties of nature dissolved in a manner by a series of selfish actions. I am not sure that Rachael and Leah were clear of this spirit towards their father: their words imply that they were sufficiently on their own side. Yet the complaints which they make of him were but too well founded. The sordid bargain which he had made with Jacob, exacting fourteen years' labor from him as the price of his daughters, appears to have stung them at the time; and, now that an opportunity offers, they speak their minds without reserve. They felt that they had been treated more like slaves than daughters, and that he had not consulted their happiness any more than their husband's, but merely his own interest. Moreover, they accuse him of having *devoured all their money.* Instead of providing for them as daughters, which the law of nature required (2 Cor. xii. 14,) he seems to have contrived to get all that private money which it is common to allow a son or a daughter while residing with their parents, into his hands, and had kept them in a manner pennyless. Hence they allege that all the riches which had been taken from him and given to their husband were theirs and their children's in right; and that God knowing their injuries, had done this to redress them. Upon the whole, their mind is that Jacob should go, and they will go with him.

We have seen some things in the history of these women which has induced us to hope well of them, notwithstanding their many failings: but though in this case it was their duty to comply with the desire of their husband, and to own the hand of God in what had taken place between their father and him; yet there is something in their manner of expressing themselves that looks more like the spirit of the world than the spirit which is of God. A right spirit would have taught them to remember that Laban, whatever was his conduct, was still their father. They might have felt it impossible to vindicate him; but they should not have expatiated on his faults in such a manner as to take pleasure in exposing them. Such conduct was but too much like that of Ham towards his father. And as to their acknowledging the hand of God in giving their father's riches to their husband, this is no more than is often seen in the most selfish characters, who can easily admire the divine providence when it goes in their favor. The ease, however, with which all men can discern what is just and equitable towards themselves renders the love of ourselves a proper standard for the love of others, and will, sooner or later, stop the mouth of every sinner. Even those who have no written revelation have this divine law engraven on their consciences: they can judge with the nicest accuracy what is justice to them, and therefore cannot plead ignorance of what is justice from them to others.

DISCOURSE XL.

JACOB'S DEPARTURE FROM HARAN.

Gen. xxxi. 17—55.

Ver. 17—21. Jacob having consulted with his wives, and obtained their consent, the next step was to prepare for their departure. Had Laban known it, there is reason to fear he would either have detained him by force, or at least have deprived him of a part of his property. He must therefore, if possible, depart without his knowledge. At that time Laban was three days'

journey from home, at a sheep-shearing.—Jacob, taking advantage of this, effected his escape. The women, returning from the field, collected their matters together in a little time; and, being all ready, Jacob rose up, set his family upon the camels, and with all his substance, set off for his father's house in the land of Canaan. Being apprehensive that Laban would pursue him, he passed over the Euphrates, and hastened on his way towards mount Gilead.

I do not know that we can justly blame Jacob for this his sudden and secret departure; but, when we read of Rachel's availing herself of her father's absence to steal his images, a scene of iniquity opens to our view! What, then, is the family of Nahor, who left the idolatrous Chaldees—the family to which Abraham and Isaac repaired, in marrying their children, to the rejection of the idolatrous Canaanites—is this family itself become idolators? It is even so.—But is Rachel, the beloved wife of Jacob, not only capable of stealing, but of stealing images? Some, reluctant to entertain such an opinion of her have supposed she might take them away to prevent their ill effects on her father's family: but subsequent events are far from justifying such a supposition. It is a fact that these teraphim afterwards proved a snare to Jacob's family and that he could not go up to Bethel till he had cleansed his house of them—Ch. xxxv. 1—3. But had the family of Laban cast off the acknowledgment of Jehovah, the one true God? This does not appear, for they make frequent mention of him. Both Rachel and Leah, on the birth of their children, were full of apparently devout acknowledgments of him; and we were willing thence, to entertain a hope in favor of their piety. Laban also, notwithstanding his keeping these images in his house, could afterwards invoke Jehovah to watch between him and Jacob.—ver. 49. The truth seems to be, they were like some in after times, who *sware by the Lord and by Malcham* (Zeph. i. 5); and others in our times, who are neither cold nor hot, but seem to wish to serve both God and mammon. The teraphim that Rachel stole were not public idols, set up in temples for worship; but, as some think, little images of them, a kind of household gods. Laban's family would probably have been ashamed of publicly accompanying the heathen to the worship of their gods; but they could keep images of them in their house, which implies a superstitious respect, if not a private homage paid to them.

This dividing of matters between the true God and idols has in all ages been a great source of corruption. A little before the death of Joshua, when Israel began to degenerate, it was in this way. They did not openly renounce the acknowledgment of Jehovah, but kept images of the idols in the countries round about them in their houses. Of this the venerable man was aware: and therefore, when they declared, saying, "We will serve Jehovah, for he is our God," he answered, "Ye cannot serve Jehovah, for he is a holy God, he is a jealous God: he will not forgive your transgressions, nor your sins." And when they replied, "Nay, but we will serve Jehovah," he answered, "Put away the strange gods that are among you;" as if he should say, "You cannot serve God and your idols; if Jehovah be God, follow him; but if Baal, follow him." What is Popery? It does not profess to renounce the true God; but abounds in images of Christ and departed saints. What is the religion of great numbers among Protestants, and even Protestant Dissenters? They will acknowledge the true God in words: but their hearts and houses are the abodes of spiritual idolatry. When a man like Laban, gives himself up to covetousness, he has no room for God or true religion. The world is his god; and he has only to reside among gross idolators in order to be one, or at least a favorer of their abominations.

Ver. 22—30. The news of Jacob's abrupt departure was soon carried to Laban, who, collecting all his force, immediately pursued him. It was seven days, however, ere he came up with him. Without doubt, he meditated mischief. He would talk of his regard to his children, and grandchildren, and how much he was hurt in being prevented from taking leave of them: but that which lay nearest his heart was the substance which Jacob had taken with him. This I conceive he meant by some means to recover. And, if he had by persuasion or force induced the family to return, it had been only for the sake of this. But, the night before he overtook Jacob, God appeared to him in a dream, and warned him not only against doing him harm, but even against "speaking to him (that is on the subject of returning to Haran) either good or bad." From this time his spirit was manifestly overawed, and his heart was smitten as with a palsey. Overtaking Jacob at Mount Gilead, he begins with him in rather a lofty tone, but falters as he proceeds, dwelling upon the same charges over and over again. "What hast thou done, said he, "that thou hast stolen away unawares to me, and carried away my daughters, as captives taken with the sword? Wherefore didst thou flee away secretly, and steal away from me? and didst not tell me, that I might have sent thee away with mirth, and with songs, with tabret and with harp? and hast not suffered me to kiss my sons and my daughters? thou hast now done foolishly in so doing."

In all this he means to insinuate that Jacob had no cause to leave him on account of any thing *he* had done; that where there was so much secrecy there must be something dishonorable; and that, in pursuing him, he was only moved by affection to his children. He adds, "It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt: but the God of your father spake unto me yesternight, saying, 'Take thou heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.'" Without doubt Laban's company was much more powerful than that of Jacob, and he meant to impress this idea upon him, that his forbearance might appear to be the effect of generosity; nay, it is possible he might think he acted very religiously, in paying so much deference to the warning voice of his God. He concludes by adding, "And now, though thou wouldst needs be gone, because thou sore longedst after thy father's house; yet wherefore hast thou stolen my gods?" The manner in which he accounts for his desire to be gone has an appearance of candor and sympathy; but the design was to insinuate that it was not on account of any ill treatment he had received from *him*, and perhaps to give an edge to the heavy charge with which his speech is concluded. It was cutting to be accused of theft; more so of having stolen what he abhored; and, for the charge to be preferred by a man who wished to make every possible allowance, would render it more cutting still. Jacob felt it, and all his other accusations, as his answers sufficiently indicate.

Ver. 31—32. With respect to the reiterated complaints of the *secrecy* of his departure, Jacob answers all in a few words: It was "because I was afraid: for I said peradventure thou wouldst take by force thy daughters from me." This was admitting his power, but impeaching his justice: and, as *he* had dwelt only upon the taking away of his daughters, so *Jacob* in answer confines himself to them. Laban might feel for the loss of something else besides his daughters; and Jacob when he left Haran, might be afraid for something else; but, as the charge respected only them, it was sufficient that the answer corresponded to it. If by withholding the women he could have detained him and his substance, his former conduct proved that he would not have been to be trusted. With respect to the gods, Jacob's answer is expressive of the strongest indignation. He will not deign to disown the charge; but desires that all his company might be searched, saying, "With whomsoever thou findst thy gods let him not live!" It was worthy of an upright man to feel indignant at the charge of stealing, and of a servant of God at that of stealing idols. But unless he had been as well assured of the innocence of all about him as he was of his own, he ought not to have spoken as he did. His words might have proved a sorer trial to him than he was aware of.

Though Laban had not expressly charged him with fraud in any thing except the gods; yet, having dwelt so much upon the *privacy* of his departure as to intimate a general suspicion, Jacob answers also in a general way, "Before our brethren, discern thou what is thine with me, and take it to thee." It was unpleasant to be thus pursued, accused, and searched; but it was all well.—But for this, his uprightness would have appeared in a more suspicious light.

Ver. 33—42. Laban accepts the offer and now begins to search. Going from tent to tent, he hopes to find at least his gods. Rachel's policy, however, eludes his vigilance: "He searched, but found not the images." No mention is made of his going among the cattle which proves he had no suspicion of being wronged in respect of them. During the search, Jacob looked on and said nothing; but, when nothing was found that could justify the heavy charges which had been preferred against him, his spirit was provoked. "He was wroth, and chode with Laban." Hard words and cutting interrogations follow. "What is my trespass? what is my sin, that thou hast so hotly pursued after me? Whereas thou hast searched all my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy household stuff? Set it here before my brethren, and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us both." He goes on, and takes a review of his whole conduct towards him for twenty years past, and proves that he had been very hardly dealt with, summing up his answer in these very emphatic terms: "Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac had been with me," notwithstanding all thy talk of sending me away with mirth and with songs, with tabret and with harp, "surely thou hadst sent me away now empty: God hath seen mine affliction, and labor of mine hands and rebuked thee yesternight." Laban made a merit of obeying the dream; but Jacob improves it into an evidence of his evil design for which God had *rebuked* him, and pleaded the cause of the injured.

Ver. 43—53. Laban, whose spirit was checked before he began, was now confounded. He quite gives up the cause, and wishes to make up matters as well as he can. He cannot help prefacing his wish, however, with a portion of vain boasting and affected generosity. "These daughters are my daughters, and these children are my children, and these cattle are my cattle, and all that thou seest is mine: and what can I do this day unto these my daughters or unto their children which they have

borne?" As if he had said, yes, yes, God hath given you many things; but remember they were all mine, and you have obtained them under me. Let us have no more disputes, however; for though I am come so far, and possess so great a force, yet, how can I find in my heart to hurt my own children? Come, therefore, and let us make a covenant and be good friends.

Jacob makes no reply to Laban's boasting, but lets it pass; and though he had felt so keenly, and spoken so warmly, yet he consents to a covenant of peace. Anger may rise in the breast of a wise man; but it *resteth* only *in the bosom of fools.* He said nothing, but expressed his mind by actions. He first "took a stone and set it up for a pillar;" then said to his brethren, "Gather stones; and they took stones, and made a heap, and did eat together," in token of reconciliation, upon it. This done, Laban called it *Jegarsahadutha*, and Jacob *Galeed;* the one was the Syriac and the other the Hebrew word for the same thing; that is, *the heap of witness.* It was also called *Mizpah*, a *beacon* or *watch-tower.* The meaning of these names, in reference to the present case, is explained by Laban, as being the elder man, and the leading party in the covenant. "This heap," said he, "is a *witness* between me and thee this day. Jehovah *watch* between me and thee, when we are absent one from another. If thou shalt afflict my daughters, or if thou shalt take other wives besides my daughters, no man is with us: see, God is witness betwixt me and thee." To this he added, "Behold this heap, and behold this pillar---this heap be witness, and this pillar be witness, that I will not pass over this heap to thee, and that thou shalt not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me, for harm. The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father judge betwixt us." To this covenant Jacob fully assented, and sware by the fear of his father Isaac; that is, by the God whom Isaac feared.

We are surprised to hear a man who had been seven days in pursuit of certain stolen gods speak so much, and in so solemn a manner, about Jehovah: but wicked men will, on some occasions, utter excellent words. After all, he could not help manifesting his attachment to idolatry. When speaking to Jacob of Jehovah, he calls him "the God of *your* father," in a manner as if he was not *his* God; and, in swearing to the solemn covenant which had been made between them, he does not appear to have invoked Jehovah as the *only* true God. It is very observable that though he makes mention of "the God of Abraham," yet it is in connexion with *Nahor* and their father, that is, Terah: but when Abraham was with Nahor and Terah they were idolaters. To this purpose we read in Joshua: "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah the father of Abraham, and the father of Nahor; and they served other gods." The God of Abraham, and Nahor, and Terah, therefore, were words capable of a very ill construction. Nor does Jacob appear to be ignorant of Laban's design in thus referring to their early ancestors; and therefore, that he might bear an unequivocal testimony against all idolatry, even that of Abraham in his younger years, he would swear only by "the fear of his father Isaac," who had never worshipped any other than the true God. It were worth while for those who plead for *antiquity* as a mark of the true church to consider that herein they follow the example of Laban and not of Jacob.

Ver. 54, 55. Laban had professed his regret that he had not an opportunity to enjoy a day of feasting and of mirth at parting with his children. Such a parting would hardly have been seemly, even in a family which had no fear of God before their eyes. Jacob, however, makes a *religious* feast, previously to the departure of his father-in-law. "He offered sacrifices upon the mount Galeed, and called his brethren," that is the whole company, "to eat bread: and they did eat bread, and taried all night in the mount. And early in the morning Laban rose up, and kissed his sons and his daughters, and blessed them: and Laban departed, and returned unto his place." This parting proved final. We hear no more of Laban, nor of the family of Nahor. They might for several ages retain some knowledge of Jehovah; but, mixing with it the superstitions of the country, they would in the end sink into gross idolatry, and be lost among the heathens.

On observing the *place* from which Balaam, the son of Beor, is said to have been sent for, to curse Israel, namely, *Pethor*, of Mesopotamia (Deut. xxiii. 4,) or *Aram* (Num. xxiii. 7,) or, as it is frequently called, *Padan-aram*, and that it is the same with that in which Laban dwelt, I have been inclined to think he might be one of his descendants. He is supposed to have lived about two hundred and eighty years after Jacob's departure from that country, which in those ages would not include above two or three generations. The opinion of ancient Jewish writers, though often fabulous, yet when agreeing with what is otherwise probable, may serve to strengthen it. "The Targum of Jonathan on Numb. xxii. 5, and the Targum on 1 Chron. i. 44, make Balaam to be Laban himself: and others say he was the son

of Beor the son of Laban."* The former of these opinions, though in itself utterly incredible, yet may so far be true as to hit upon the family from which he descended; and the latter, allowing perhaps for a defect of one generation, appears to me to be highly probable. Add to this, that the teraphim, or images, which Laban kept in his house, and which he would doubtless replace on his return, are supposed to be a sort of "talisman;" they "were consulted as oracles, and in high esteem with the Chaldeans and Syrians, a people given to astrology, and by which they made their divinations.—Hos. iii. 4; Zech. x. 2."† According to this, Balaam, the soothsayer, would only tread in the steps of his ancestors; not utterly disowning Jehovah, but being devoted to the abominations of the heathen.

If the above remarks be just, they show, in a strong point of light, *the progress of apostacy and corruption.* Laban imitated the corruptions of his ancestors, some of whom were good men; and his descendants degenerated still more. Thus you will often see a man who has descended from religious parents, but whose heart is entirely taken up with the world: he keeps up the forms of godliness though he denies the power, and mixes with them all the evil that he can rake up from the examples of his forefathers, and considerable additions of his own. The next generation degenerates still more, having less of the form of religion, and more conformity to the world. The third throws off both the form and the power, retaining no vestige of the religion of their ancestors, excepting a few speculative notions, learnt from a few old books and sayings, which have no other influence upon them than to enable them to be more wicked than their neighbors, by sinning against somewhat of superior light. How important is it for good men to act in character in their families, inasmuch as every evil which they practice will be re-acted and increased by their carnal posterity!

DISCOURSE XLI.

JACOB'S FEAR OF ESAU—HIS WRESTLING WITH THE ANGEL.

Gen. xxxii.

VER. 1, 2. The sacred writer, pursuing the history of Jacob, informs us that he went on his way, and the angels of God met him. And when he saw them, he said, "This is God's host: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim." That the angels of God are "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation," is a truth clearly revealed in the Scriptures: but this their ministry has seldom been rendered visible to mortals. "The angel of Jehovah," it is said, "encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." But I do not recollect that any of these celestial guardians have *appeared* in this character to the servants of God, except in times of *imminent danger.* When a host of Syrians encompassed Dothan, in order to take Elisha, his servant was alarmed, and exclaimed,—"Alas! master, how shall we do?" The prophet exclaimed, "Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." Yet there was no earthly force to protect them. But when, in answer to the prophet's prayer, "the young man's eyes were opened, he saw the mountain full of horses, and chariots of fire round about Elisha." In this case, God's host became visible, to allay the fear of man's hosts. Thus it was also in the present instance. Jacob had just escaped one host of enemies, and another is coming forth to meet him. At this juncture God's host makes its appearance, teaching him to whom he owed his late escape, and that he who had delivered, did deliver, and he might safely trust would deliver him. The angels which appeared on this occasion are called God's host, in the singular: but, by the name which Jacob gave to the place, it appears that they were divided into two, encompassing him as it were before and behind; and this would correspond with the two hosts of adversaries which at the same time, and with almost the same violent designs, were coming against him; the one had already been sent back without striking a blow, and the other should be the same. This, however, was not expressly revealed to Jacob, but merely a general encouragement afforded him; for it was not the design of God to supersede other means, but to save him in the use of them.

Ver. 3—5. Jacob has as yet heard nothing of his brother Esau, except that he had settled "in the land of Seir, the country of Edom: but knowing what had formerly taken place, and the temper of the man, he is apprehensive of consequences. He therefore resolves on sending messengers before him, in order to sound him, and, if possible, to appease his anger.—These messengers are instructed what they shall say, and how they shall conduct themselves on their arrival, all in a way to conciliate. "Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau; Thy servant Jacob saith thus: I have sojourned with Laban, and staid there until now. And I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and

* See Gill on Num. xxii. 5.
† Gill on Gen. xxxi. 19.

men-servants, and women-servants; and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight." Observe, 1. He declines the honor of precedency given him in the blessing, calling Esau *his Lord*. Isaac had said to him, "Be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee;" but Jacob either understood it of spiritual ascendency, or, if of temporal, as referring to his posterity rather than to him. He therefore declines all disputes on that head. 2. He would have him know that he was not come to claim the *double portion*, nor even to divide with him his father's inheritance; for that God had given him plenty of this world's goods without it. Now, as these were the things which had so greatly provoked Esau, a relinquishment of them would tend more than any thing to conciliate him.

Ver. 6—12. The messengers had not proceeded far ere they met Esau coming forth to meet his brother Jacob, and four hundred men with him. It would seem, by the account, that they went and delivered their message to him. But, however that was, they appear to have been struck with the idea that he was coming with a hostile design, and therefore quickly returned and informed their master of particulars. We are surprised that Jacob's journey, which had taken him only about a fortnight, and had been conducted with so much secrecy, should yet have been known to Esau. His thirst for revenge must have prompted him to great vigilance. One would think he had formed connexions with persons who lived in the way, and engaged them to give him information of the first movements of his brother. However this was, *Jacob was greatly afraid*, and even *distressed*. This term with us is sometimes lightly applied to the state of mind produced by ordinary troubles; but in the Scriptures it denotes a sore strait, from which there seems to be no way of escape. This distress would probably be heightened by the recollction of his sin, which first excited the resentment of Esau. There is no time, however, to be lost. But what can he do? Well, let us take notice what a good man will do in a time of distress, that we may as occasion requires follow his example. First: He uses all possible precaution, "dividing the people that was with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two bands," saying, "If Esau come to the one company and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape." Secondly: He betakes himself to prayer; and, as this is one of the scripture examples of successful prayer, we shall do well to take particular notice of it. Observe, 1, he approaches God *as the God of his father; and, as such, a God in covenant.* "O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac!" This was laying hold of the divine faithfulness: it was the prayer of faith. We may not have exactly the same plea in our approaches to God; but we have one that is more endearing, and more prevalent. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is a character which excites more hope, and in which more great and precious promises have been made than in the other. 2. As *his own God*, pleading what he had promised to *him*. "Jehovah, who saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee." Jehovah has never made promises to us in the same extraordinary way as he did to Jacob: but whatever he hath promised to believers in general, may be pleaded by every one of them in particular, especially when encountering opposition in the way which he hath directed them to go. 3. While he celebrates the great mercy and truth of God towards him, he acknowledges himself *unworthy* of the least instance of either. The worthiness of *merit* is what every good man, in every circumstance, must disclaim: but that which he has in view I conceive is that of *meetness*. Looking back to his own unworthy conduct, especially that which preceded and occasioned his passing over Jordan with a *staff* only in his hand, he is affected with the returns of mercy and truth which he had met with from a gracious God. By sin he had reduced himself in a manner to nothing; but God's goodness had made him great. As we desire to suceed in our approaches to God, we must be sure to take low ground; humbling ourselves in the dust before him, and suing for relief as a matter of mere grace. Finally: having thus prefaced his petition, he now presents it: "Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children." This was doubtless the petition of a kind husband and a tender father: it was not as such only, nor principally, however, but as a believer in the promises that he presented it: the great stress of the prayer turns on this hinge. It was as though he had said, If my life, and that of the mother, with the children, be cut off, how are thy promises to be fulfilled? Hence he adds, "And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy *seed* as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude." It is natural for us as husbands and as parents to be importunate with God for the well-being of those who are so nearly related to us: but the way to obtain mercy for them is to seek it in subordination te the divine glory.

Ver. 13—30. Jacob and his company

seem now to have been north of the river Jabbok, near to the place where it falls into the Jordan. Here he is said to have "lodged that night." Afterwards we read of his *rising up*, and sending his company *over the ford*.—Ver. 22. Probably it was during one single night that the whole of what follows in this chapter occurred. The messengers having returned towards evening, he divided his company into two bands, and then committed his cause to God. After this he halted for the night: but whatever sleep might fall to the lot of the children, or rest to the beasts of burden, there was but little of either for him. First, he resolves neither to flee nor fight; but to try the effect of *a present*. Upwards of five hundred head of cattle were sent off in the night, under the care of his servants; and, to produce the greater effect, they were divided into droves, with a space between drove and drove. Having sent off the present, he seems to have tried to get a little rest; but, not being able to sleep, he *rose up*, and took his whole family, and all that he had, and sent them over the ford of Jabbok. Every servant presenting his drove in the same words, would strike Esau with amazement. It would seem as if all the riches of the east were coming to him: and every one concluding by announcing his master as coming behind them would work upon his generosity. He expected, it is likely, a host of armed men, and felt resolved to fight it out; but, instead of an army, here is a present worthy of a prince, and the owner coming after it with all the confidence of a friend, and kindness of a brother.

Whether he thought it would express more friendship, and be better taken, to be at the trouble of crossing the ford in order to meet Esau, than to oblige Esau to cross it in order to meet him, or whatever was his reason, so he acted: and, the family being all over the river, *he himself staid behind*. Here it was that he met with that extraordinary appearance on which he wrestled with the Angel and prevailed. The account is as follows:—"And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh, and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel (that is, *a prince of God*;) for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name: and he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."

In this singular manifestation of God to his servant, we offer the following remarks:—1. It does not appear to be a vision, but a literal transaction. A personage, in the form of a man, really wrestled with him, and permitted him to prevail so far as to gain his object. 2. Though the form of the struggle was corporeal, yet the essence and object of it was spiritual. An inspired commentator on this wrestling says, "He wept and made supplication to the Angel." That for which he strove was a blessing, and he obtained it. 3. The personage with whom he strove is here called *a man*, and yet, in seeing him, Jacob said "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." Hosea, in reference to his being a messenger of God to Jacob, calls him "the Angel:" yet he also describes the patriarch as having "power with God." Upon the whole, there can be no doubt but that it was the same divine personage who appeared to him at Bethel, and at Padan-aram; who, *being in the form of God*, again thought it no usurpation to appear *as God*. 4. What is here recorded had relation to Jacob's distress, and may be considered as an answer to his evening supplications. By his *power with God* he had *power with men*. Esau and his hostile company were conquered at Peniel. 5. The change of his name from *Jacob* to *Israel*, and the *blessing* which followed, signified that he was no longer to be regarded as having obtained it by *supplanting* his brother, but as a *prince of God*, who had wrestled with him for it and prevailed. It was thus that the Lord pardoned his sin, and wiped away his reproach. It is observable, too, that this is the name by which his posterity are afterwards called. Finally: The whole transaction furnishes an instance of believing, importunate, and successful prayer. As Jacob would not let the Angel go except he blessed him; and as the latter (though to convince him of his power he touched the hollow of his thigh, and put it out of joint,) suffered himself to be overcome by him; so every true Israelite pleads the promises of God with an importunity that will take no denial, and God is pleased to suffer himself in this manner to be as it were overcome.

Ver. 30--32. What a night was this to Jacob! What a difference between what he felt the past evening, on the return of the messengers, and what he now felt! Well might he wonder and exclaim, "I have seen God face to face, and my life is

preserved!" Passing over Peniel, however, to rejoin his family, just as the sun rose upon him, *he halted upon his thigh.* This would be a memorial to him of his own weakness, as well as of the power and goodness of God, who instead of touching a single part, might, as he intimated, have taken away his *life.* The law which afterwards prevailed in Israel, of not eating of the sinew which shrank, might be of divine origin, as it corresponds with the genius of the ceremonial economy.

DISCOURSE XLII.

JACOB'S INTERVIEW WITH ESAU, AND ARRIVAL IN CANAAN.

Gen. xxxiii.

VER. 1—4. No sooner had Jacob passed over the ford of Jabbok, and rejoined his family, but, lifting up his eyes, he saw his brother approaching him, and four hundred men with him. He has just time before he comes up, to arrange his family, placing the children with their respective mothers, and those last for whom he has the tenderest affection. This circumstance shows that though he treated Esau with the fullest confidence, yet he was still secretly afraid of him. He must, however, put the best face he can upon it, and go on to meet him. This he does; and, as he had by his messengers acknowledged him as his *lord,* so he will do the same by *bowing down to him.* His object was to satisfy him that he made no claim of that kind of pre-eminence which the other's heart was set upon, but freely gave it up. And this seems to have had the desired effect on Esau's mind; for though he did not bow in return to his brother, since that had been relinquishing his superiority; yet "he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him:" nor could such an unexpected meeting fail to dissolve both of them in tears! It is pleasant and affecting to see the bitter heart of Esau thus melted by a kind and yielding conduct. We must not forget that God's hand was in it, who turneth the hearts of men as rivers of water: but neither must we overlook the means by which it was effected. "A soft tongue," saith Solomon, "breaketh the bone." On which our commentator *Henry* remarks, with his usual pith, "Hard words, we say, break no bones, and therefore we should bear them patiently; but it seems soft words do, and therefore we should on all occasions, give them prudently." Treat men as friends, and make them so. Pray but as Jacob did, and be as obliging and condescending as he was, and you will go through the world by it.

Ver. 5—7. The two brothers having wept over each other, Esau, lifting up his eyes, saw the women and children, and inquired who they were. Jacob's answer is worthy of him. It savors of the fear of God which ruled in his heart, and taught him to acknowledge him even in the ordinary concerns of life. "They are," saith he, "the children which God hath graciously given thy servant. Then the handmaidens came near, they and their children, and they bowed themselves. And Leah also with her children, came near and bowed themselves: and after came Joseph near, and Rachel, and they bowed themselves." Had this been done to Jacob, methinks he would have answered, "God be gracious unto you, my children!" But we must take Esau as he is, and rejoice that things are as they are. We have often occasion to be thankful for civilities, where we can find nothing like religion. One cannot help admiring the uniformly good behavior of all Jacob's family. If one of them had failed, it might have undone all the good which his ingratiating conduct had done: but, to their honor it is recorded, they all acted in unison with him. When the head of a family does right, and the rest follow his example, every thing goes on well.

Ver. 8. But Esau desires to know the meaning of these droves of cattle being sent to him. The answer is, "These are to find grace in the sight of my lord." This would express how high a value he set upon his favor, and how much he desired to be reconciled to him; and so tended to conciliate. We might in most cases, purchase peace and good-will from men at a much cheaper rate than this; a few shillings, nay, often only a few kind words, would do it; and yet we see for the want of these, strifes, contentions, law-suits, and I know not what evil treatment, even between those who ought to love as brethren. But, if the favor of man be thus estimable, how much more that of God! Yet no worldly substance, nor good deeds of ours, are required as the price of this; but merely the receiving of it as a free gift, through Him who hath given himself a sacrifice to obtain the consistent exercise of it towards the unworthy.

Ver. 9—11. The reply of Esau to this obliging answer was, "I have enough, my brother; keep that thou hast unto thyself." There might be in this language pretty much of a high spirit of independence. Whatever effect Jacob's present had upon him, he would not be thought to be influenced by any thing of that kind; especially as he had great plenty of his own. Jacob,

however, continued to urge it upon him, not as if he thought he needed, but as a token of good-will, and of his desire to be reconciled. He did not indeed make use of this term, nor of any other that might lead to the recollection of their former variance. He did not say that he should consider the acceptance of his present as a proof that he was cordially reconciled to him: but what he did say, though more delicately expressed, was to the same effect. Such I conceive to be the import of the terms, "If now I have found grace in thy sight, then receive my present at my hand." The receiving of a present at another's hand is perhaps one of the greatest proofs of reconciliation. Every one is conscious that he could not receive a present at the hand of an enemy. And upon this principle no offerings of sinful creatures can be accepted of God, till they are reeonciled to him by faith in the atonement of his Son. To find grace in the sight of Esau, and to have his present accepted as a token of it, was the desire of Jacob. To these ends he further assures him how highly his favor was accounted of, and that to have seen his face in the manner he had was to him next to seeing *the face of God.* This was strong language, and doubtless it was expressive of strong feelings. Reconciliation with those with whom we have long been at variance, especially when it was through our own misconduct, is, as to its effect upon the mind, next to reconciliation with God. Finally: he entreats him to accept what he had presented, as his *blessing* (so a present was called when accompanied with love, or good-will: see Josh. xv. 19; 1 Sam. xxv. 27; 2 Kings v. 15:) and the rather because God had graciously blessed him, and given him *enough;* nay, more, had given him *all things.* Esau on this accepted it; and, as far as we know, the reconciliation was sincere and lasting.

Ver. 12—15. Esau proposes to be going, and to guard his brother and his family through the country. The proposal was doubtless very friendly and very honorable; and appears to have contained an invitation to Jacob and his family to his house at Seir: but Jacob respectfully declines it, on account of the feebleness of the cattle, and of the children. There is no reason that I know of for supposing Jacob had any other motive than that which he alleged; and this is expressive of his gentleness as a shepherd, and his tenderness as a father. There are many persons with whom we may wish to be on good terms, who nevertheless, on acount of a difference of character, taste, or manners, would be very unsuitable companions for us. Jacob proposes going to Seir after his arrival; and this he probably did, though we read not of it. We have no account of his visting his father Isaac till he had been several years in Canaan; yet, to suppose him capable of such a neglect, were not only injurious to his character, but contrary to what is implied in Deborah, one of Isaac's family, being found in his house at the time of her death.—Ch. xxxv. 8. Esau's first proposal being declined, he next offers to leave a part of his men as a guard to Jacob's company; but this also he respectfully declines, on the ground of its being unnecessary; adding, "Let me find grace in the sight of my lord"—which I conceive was equal to saying, Let me have thy favor, and it is all I desire.

Ver. 16—20. The two brothers having parted friendly, Esau returns to Seir, and Jacob journeyed to a place east of Jordan, where he stopped awhile, and built a house for his family, and booths for his cattle. Upon this spot a city was afterwards built, and called *Succoth;* that is, *booths,* from the circumstance above related.—Josh. xiii. 27; Judges viii. 5. He did not stop here, however, with a design to abide; for he was commanded to return *to the land of his kindred,* that is, to Canaan, and he was as yet not in Canaan: but, finding it a country abounding with rich pasture, he might wish to refresh his herds, and take time for inquiry into a more suitable place for a continued residence. Hence, when after this he passed over Jordan, and "came to Shalem, a city of Shechem, in the land of Canaan," it is said to be "when he came from Padan-aram;" intimating that till then he had not arrived at the end of his journey. *Shalem* is considered by *Ainsworth,* and some others, not as the name of a city, but as a term denoting the *peace and safety* with which Jacob arrived. Hence they render it, "He came *in safety,* or *in peace,* to the city of Shechem." It is an argument in favor of this translation that we have no account of a city called Shalem, near to Shechem. All agree that it could not be the place where Melchizedek reigned, as it was forty miles distant from it; and as to that near Enon, where John was baptizing (John iii. 23,) it was not in the neghborhood of Shechem, but of Jordan. This rendering also gives additional propriety and force to the phrase, "When he came from Padan-aram." It is a declaration to the honor of him who had said, "Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land. He arrived *in peace* at his journey's end, notwithstanding the dangers and difficulties he met with by the way.

Shechem, before which Jacob pitched his tent, was a city called after the name of the son of Hamor, its king, of whom we

shall presently hear more. It is the same place as that which in the New-Testament is called *Sychar.*—John iv. 5. Here he bought "a parcel of a field." that neither he nor his cattle might trespass on the property of others. This field was afterwards taken from him, it should seem, by the Amorites; and he was under the necessity of recovering it "by his sword and his bow:" which having accomplished, he bequeathed it to his son Joseph. I have sometimes thought that this parcel of ground might be designed to exhibit a specimen of the whole land of Canaan. When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, he marked out an allotment for the children of Israel (Deut. xxxii. 8:) but the Canaanites, taking possession of it, were obliged to be dispossessed by the rightful owners, with the sword and with the bow.

But that which requires the most particular notice is, that "he erected there an altar, and called it El-elohe-Israel; i. e. God the God of Israel." It was worthy of this great and good man publicly to acknowledge God, after so many signal deliverances, and soon after his arrival. His first purchasing a piece of ground, and there erecting his altar, was like saying, Whenever this whole country shall be in possession of my posterity, let it in this manner be devoted to God. Nay, it was as if he had then taken possession of it in the name of the God of Israel, by setting up his standard in it. It is the first time also in which he is represented as availing himself of his *new name*, and of the *covenant blessing* conferred upon him under it. The name given to the altar was designed, no doubt, to be a memorial of both; and, whenever he should present his offerings upon it, to revive all those sentiments which he had felt when wrestling with God at Peniel. It were no less happy for us than consistent with our holy profession, if every distinguishing turn of our lives were distinguished by renewed resignations of ourselves to God. Such times and places would serve as memorials of mercy, and enable us to recover those thoughts and feelings which we possessed in our happiest days.

DISCOURSE XLIII.

DINAH DEFILED, AND THE SHECHEMITES MURDERED.

Gen. xxxiv.

The arrival of Jacob in Canaan promised fair for a holy and happy residence in it. Laban no more oppresses him, and the breach between him and his brother Esau is healed. But alas! foreign troubles being removed, domestic ones take place of them. He had but one daughter, and she is defiled. He had many sons, and the greater part of them are deceitful and cruel. What with the conduct of the one and the other, his heart must be sorely grieved. It was not however till he had lived six or seven years in the neighborhood of Shechem that these troubles came upon him; for in less time than this the two brethren could not have arrived at man's estate: and there is reason to believe that, from his first settlement at this place, his mind began to sink into a state of spiritual declension. One would think, if he had had a proper sense of things, he could not have continued so long to expose a family of young people to the contagious influence of a heathen city. It was next to the conduct of Lot when he took up his residence in Sodom.

Ver. 1, 2. It is natural to suppose that the younger branches of the family, hearing every thing that was going on among the youth of the place, would think it hard if they must not go among them. Whether the sons formed acquaintances among the Shechemites, we know not; but Dinah, on a certain occasion, "must needs go out to see the daughters of the land." She wished no doubt to be acquainted with them, to see and be seen of them, and to do as they did. It might not be to a ball, nor a card-party; but I presume it was to some merry-making of this kind: and though the daughters of the land were her professed companions, yet the sons of the land must have assembled with them, else how came Shechem there? Young people, if you have any regard for your parents, or for yourselves, beware of such parties! The consequence was what might have been expected. Shechem was the son of the "prince of the country," and men of rank and opulence are apt to think themselves entitled to do any thing which their inclinations prompt them to. The young woman was inexperienced, and unused to company of this kind; she therefore fell an easy prey to the seducer. But could Dinah have gone without the consent or connivance of her parents, at least of one of them? We should think she could not. I fear Leah was not clear in this matter.

Ver. 3, 4. The story is such as must needs excite indignation: some circumstances, however, bad as it is, tend in a certain degree to extenuate it. The young man is not like Amnon by Tamar; he is attached to her, and applies to his father Hamor to obtain her for him to wife. Had this been done at first, all had been honor-

able; but a bad beginning seldom admits of a good ending. And though a respectful application was immediately made to the parents of the damsel, yet she herself was at the same time detained in Shechem's house. But let us observe the effect of this disgraceful transaction.

Ver. 5—24. The news soon reached Jacob's ear; his sons were in the field; he felt much no doubt, but said nothing till they returned. He did not, however, foresee what would follow, or he would not have reserved the utterance of his grief to them. But probably he knew not what to do. If Leah had connived at her daughter's visit, he would not know how to speak to her; and, as to Rachel, the jealousies between the sisters might prevent his speaking freely to the one on the concerns of the other. So he held his peace till his sons should return. Meanwhile Hamor, and it seems his son with him, came out of the city to Jacob, to commune with him on the subject, and to ask the young woman in marriage. It had been well if he and Jacob had settled it, and this to all appearance they might have done; but scandal, with its swift wings, reaching the young men in the field, brought them home before the usual time; so that Hamor and his son had scarcely entered Jacob's door, ere they followed them. Had Jacob and Hamor conversed the matter over by themselves, or Jacob and his sons by themselves, their anger might have been somewhat abated; but, all meeting together, there was no vent for the first strong feelings of the mind; and such feelings when suppressed, like subterraneous fires, must find their way, and very commonly issue in some dreadful explosion. The young men said little, but thought the more. The real state of their minds is thus described; "And the men were grieved, and they were very wroth, because he had wrought folly in Israel in lying with Jacob's daughter, which thing ought not to be done." There certainly was cause for great displeasure; and provided it had been directed against the sin, frankly avowed, and kept within the limits of equity, great displeasure ought to have been manifested. Light as heathens and other wicked men may make of fornication, it is an evil and a bitter thing. To the honor of Jacob and his posterity, he that was guilty of it among them was said to have "wrought folly in Israel," and to have done that which "ought not to be done." It might be from the present early example that this phraseology became proverbially descriptive of a fornicator (2 Sam. xiii. 12;) and a great advantage it must be to any people where the state of society is so far influenced by principles of honor and chastity, as by common consent to brand such characters with infamy. It was proper that the brothers of the young woman should be *grieved:* it was not unnatural that they should be *wroth:* but wherefore did they feel thus strongly? Was it for the sin committed against God, or only for the shame of it in respect of the family? Here, alas! they failed; and this it was that prompted them to all their other wickedness. Jacob was grieved and displeased as well as they: but his grief and displeasure wrought not in the manner theirs did. The reserve which they assumed, while Hamor and his son were speaking, concealed behind it the most deadly resentment. They heard all that was said (and many fine things were said, both by the father as a politician, in favor of intermarriages between the families in general, and by the son as a lover, in order to gain the damsel;) they heard it, I say, with much apparent coolness, and stated their objections in a manner as if there was nothing between them but the compliance with a certain ceremony, and as though they felt nothing for their sister that should hinder their entering into a covenant of peace with him who had seduced her. But all was *deceit;* a mere cover to a bloody design, which they appear to have formed for the purpose of revenge; *because he had defiled Dinah their sister.*

The deceitful proposal, however, succeeded: "Their words pleased Hamor, and Shechem, Hamor's son." So they go about forthwith to persuade the citizens into a compliance with them; not as a matter of prineiple, but of policy, as a measure which would contribute to the country's good. They also succeed, the Shechemites are circumcised, and all seems to bid fair for an amicable issue.

But let us pause and reflect on the right and wrong in these transactions. What was the line of conduct that Hamor and Shechem should have pursued? They ought no doubt, in the first place, to have restored the young woman to her parents; and at the same time to have acknowledged the great injury done to her and to the family, and expressed their sorrow on account of it. Till they had done this, they had no reason to expect any thing like reconciliation on the part of Jacob, or his sons. But it is likely the young man being of so honorable a family, and the sin of fornication being so common in the country, made them think these punctilios might be dispensed with in the present instance. And, being wholly under the influence of sensual and worldly motives, they are prepared to profess any religion, or profane any institution, however sacred, so that they may accomplish their selfish ends.—But what was the line of conduct which ought to have

been pursued by Jacob and his sons? If the one had taken a greater share in the conversation, and the other a less, it had been more to the honor of both; and might not have issued in the manner it did. It is very proper for brothers to consider themselves as guardians of a sister's honor; but not in such a way as to supersede the authority or silence the counsel of a father. The answer to the question, Whether Dinah should be given in marriage to Shechem, belonged to the parents, and not to the brothers. With respect to the displeasure which required to be expressed, it ought to have been confined to words; and, if the proposed marriage could not be acceded to, they should, as they said, have "taken their sister and been gone." As to their objection on the score of circumcision, there appears to have been no such law established as yet in Jacob's family. It is true they were discouraged from marrying with the devotees of idolatry; but the circumcision of the Shechemites was merely a form; and, had they been suffered to live, would have produced no change in respect of this. Could they indeed have been induced to renounce their idolatrous practices, and to cast in their lot with Israel, the good had overbalanced the evil; but religion was no part of the young men's concern: the whole was a mere pretence, to cover their malignant designs.

Ver. 25—29. The result was shocking. Simeon and Levi, two of Dinah's brethren by the same mother, as well as father, availing themselves of the present incapacity of the Shechemites to resist them, took each man his sword, and slew all the males of the city, with Hamor, and Shechem his son, and took their sister out of his house, and went their way! Nor was this cruel business to be attributed to the two brothers only; for the rest were so far accessory as to join in plundering the city, and taking captive all the females.

Alas, how one sin leads on to another, and, like flames of fire, spreads desolation in every direction! Dissipation leads to seduction; seduction produces wrath; wrath thirsts for revenge; the thirst of revenge has recourse to treachery; treachery issues in murder; and murder is followed by lawless depredation! Were we to trace the history of illicit commerce between the sexes, we should find it, more perhaps than any other sin, terminating in blood. We may read this warning truth, not only in the history of David and his family, but in what is constantly occurring in our own times. The murder of the innocent offspring by the hand of the mother, or of the mother by the hand of the seducer, or of the seducer by the hand of a brother or a supplanted rival—is an event which too frequently falls under our notice. Nor is this all, even in the present world. Murder seldom escapes detection; a public execution therefore may be expected to close the tragical process!

Ver. 30, 31. It is some relief to find the good old man expressing his disapprobation of these proceedings: "Ye have troubled me," says he to Simeon and Levi, "to make me stink among the inhabitants of the land—and, I being few in number, they shall gather themselves together against me, and I shall be destroyed, I and my house." Both Abraham and Isaac had carried it peaceably in all places where they pitched their tents, and by their good conduct had recommended true religion, and gained great respect among the heathen. It was Jacob's desire to have trod in their steps; but his sons were children of Belial who knew not the Lord; yet, being so nearly akin to him, his character is implicated by their conduct. Their answer is insolent in the extreme: "Should he deal with our sister," say they "as with a harlot?" As if their father had no proper concern for the honor of his children, and cared not what treatment they met with, so that he might be at peace and maintain his credit.

But how is it that Jacob should dwell only upon the *consequences* of the sin, and say nothing about the sin itself? Probably because he knew his sons to be so hardened in wickedness that nothing but consequences, and such as affected their own safety too, would make them feel. It is certain that he did abhor the deed, and that with all his soul. Of this he gave a most affecting proof upon his dying bed, when, instead of blessing the two brethren with the rest of his children, he in a manner cursed them, or at least branded their conduct with perpetual infamy. "Simeon and Levi," said he, "are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations. Oh! my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united; for in their anger they slew a man, and in their self-will they digged down a wall. Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel!"*

* Simeon and Levi are brethren,
Instruments of violence are their fraudulent bargains:
Into their secret come not thou, O my soul;
Unto their assembly be not united, mine honor:
For in their anger they slew a man,
And in their self-will they exterminated a prince.
Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce;
And their excess of passion, for it was cruel.
I will divide them in Jacob,
And scatter them in Israel.
But Venema would render the last distich in a good sense.
[Yet] I will grant them a portion in Jacob,
And cause them to be diffus'd abroad (Gen. x. 18) in Israel. R.

We read no more of Dinah, except her bare name; probably she died single. Her example affords a loud warning to young people to beware of visiting in mixed companies, or indulging in amusements by which they put themselves in the way of temptation.

DISCOURSE XLIV.

JACOB'S REMOVAL TO BETHEL—GOD'S RENEWAL OF COVENANT WITH HIM—THE DEATH OF DEBORAH, RACHEL, AND ISAAC—ESAU'S GENERATIONS.

Gen. xxxv. xxxvi.

HHERE is a greater diversity in the life of this patriarch than in that of Abraham, and much greater than in that of Isaac. If he did not attain to "the days of the years of the life of his fathers," the records of his pilgrimage are not less useful than those of either of them.

Ver. 1. It might have been expected that Jacob would leave Shechem, on account of what had taken place: yet he would not know whither to flee: but "God said unto him, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother." This admonition appears to resemble that which was addressed to Abram, "Walk before me, and be thou perfect;" that is, it implies a reproof, and was intended to lead Jacob to reflect upon his conduct. There were two things in particular, which required his serious consideration. 1. Whether he had not neglected to perform his vow. He had solemnly declared, in the presence of God, that if he would be with him, and keep him in the way he went, and give him bread to eat, and raiment to put on, then Jehovah should be his God: and that the stone which he then set up for a pillar should be God's house.—Ch. xxviii. 20—22. Now God had performed all these things on his part; but Jacob had not been at Bethel, even though he had now resided in Canaan about seven years. And, what was worse, though Jehovah had been his God, so far as respected himself, yet his house was not clear of idols! Rachel's stolen teraphim had proved a snare to the family. At the time Laban overtook him, Jacob knew nothing of them, but he appears to have discovered them afterwards; and yet, till roused by this divine admonition, he never interposed his authority to have them *put away*. 2. Whether the late lamentable evils in his family had not arisen from this cause. Had he gone sooner to Bethel, his house had been sooner purged of the *strange gods* that were in it, and his children had escaped the taint which they must of necessity impart. At first the gods of Laban were hid by Rachel, and none of the family except herself seemed to know of them: but now Jacob had to speak to his "household, and to all that were with him," to cleanse themselves. Moreover, had he gone sooner to Bethel, his children might have been out of the way of temptation, and all the impure and bloody conduct in which they were concerned have been prevented. From the whole, we see the effects of spiritual negligence, and of trifling with temptation. Do not neglect God's house, nor delay to keep his commandments. He that puts them off to a more convenient season has commonly some idols about him, which it does not suit him just yet to put away.

Ver. 2, 3. No sooner is Jacob admonished to go to Bethel than he feels the necessity of a reformation, and gives command for it. This proves that he knew of the corrupt practises of his family, and had too long connived at them. We are glad, however, to find him resolved at last to *put them away*. A constant attendance on on God's ordinances is *dwelling* as it were in Bethel; and it is by this that we detect evils in ourselves which we should otherwise retain without thought or concern. It is "coming to the light," which will "manifest our deeds, whether they be wrought in God" or not. Wicked men may reconcile the most sacred religious duties with the indulgence of secret sins; but good men cannot do so. They must wash their hands in innocency, and so compass God's altar.—Psalm xxvi. 6. Jacob not only commands his household to put away their idols, but endeavors to impress upon them his own sentiments. "Let us arise," saith he, "and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went." He is decided for himself, and uses all means to persuade his family to unite with him. His intimating that God had heretofore *answered him in the day of his distress* might be designed not only to show them the propriety of what he was about to do, but to excite a hope that God might disperse the cloud which *now* hung over them on account of the late impure and bloody transaction.

Ver. 4. Considering the evils which prevailed in this family, and the bewitching nature of idolatry, it is rather surprising to observe the readiness with which they consent to give it up. But no doubt the hand of the Lord was in it. When Jacob spoke as he ought to speak, their hearts were bowed before him. Difficulties which, in a

languid state of mind, seem insurmountable, are easily got over when once we come to act decidedly for God: and those whom we expected to oppose the good work shall frequently be found willing to engage with us in it. They not only gave their gods, but even their *ear-rings*, which in those times were convertible, and often, if not always, converted to purposes of idolatry.—Exodus xxxii. 2. Hos. ii. 13. But why did Jacob bury them? We may think they might have been melted down, and converted to a better use: but that was expressly forbidden by the Mosaic law, Deut. vii. 25, and it seems the patriarchs acted on the same principle. But why did he not utterly destroy them? Perhaps it would have been better if he had. I hope, however, he hid them where they were found no more. Upon the whole, we see at this time a great change for the better in Jacob's family. He should not have been reluctant, or indifferent, to going up to Bethel; for it appears to have been the design of God to make it one of his best removals. It was a season of grace, in which God not only blessed him, but caused even those that *dwelt under his shadow to return.* I have more hope of Rachel and Leah's having relinquished all for the God of Israel from this time than from any thing in the former part of their history.

Ver. 5. We now see Jacob and his family on their journey. It would appear to the cities round about, that the slaughter of the Shechemites was the cause of this removal. Their *not pursuing them* being ascribed to *the terror of God being upon them* implies that the public indignation was so excited against them that, if they had dared, they would have cut them off. The kind care which God exercised on this occasion was no less contrary to the parent's fears than to the deserts of his ungodly children; and its being extended to them *for his sake* must, if they had any sense of things, appal their proud spirits, and repress the insolence with which they had lately treated him.

Ver. 6, 7. Arriving at Bethel in safety, Jacob, according to his vow, "built there an altar" unto Jehovah, and gave it a name which God had graciously given himself; namely, "*El-Bethel, the God of Bethel.*" This altar, and this name, would serve as a perpetual memorial of God's having "appeared to him when he fled from the face of his brother." And, as at that time many great and precious promises were made to him, it would be natural for him to associate with the idea of *the God of Bethel* that of a God *in covenant;* the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

Ver. 8. While Jacob and his family were at Bethel, their enjoyments seem to have been interrupted by the death of "Deborah Rebecca's nurse." Some particulars are here implied which are not recorded in the history. Deborah did not belong to the family of Jacob, but to that of Isaac. Jacob must therefore have gone and visited his father; and finding his mother dead, and her nurse far advanced in years, more fit to be nursed herself than to be of any use to her aged master, he took her home where she would meet with kind attentions from her younger country-women, and probably furnished his father with another more suitable in her place. Nothing is said of her from the time she left Padan-aram with her young mistress: but, by the honorable mention that is here made of her, she seems to have been a worthy character. The death of an aged servant, when her work was done, would not ordinarily excite much regret. To have afforded her a decent burial was all that in most cases would be thought of: but Jacob's family were so much affected by the event as not only to weep over her grave, but to call the very tree under the shadow of which she was interred *Allon-bachuth, the oak of weeping.* It is the more singular, too, that the family who wept over her was not that in which she had lived in what we should call her best days; but one that had merely taken her under their care in her old age. It is probable, however, that the sorrow expressed at her interment was on account, not only of her character, but her office, or her having been "Rebecca's nurse." The text seems to lay an emphasis upon these words. The sight of the daughter of Laban, "his mother's brother," and even of his sheep, had interested Jacob's heart, ch. xxix. 10; much more would the burial of her nurse. In weeping over her grave, he would seem to be weeping over that of his beloved parent and, paying that tribute of affection to her memory which providence had denied him at the time of her decease.

Ver. 9—15. During the seven years in which Jacob resided at Shechem we do not find a single instance of God's manifesting himself to him, except that of admonishing him to depart. But now that he has come to Bethel, and has performed his vow, "God appeared unto him again, and blessed him." But how is it that this is said to be "when he came out of Padan-aram?" The design of the phrase, I apprehend, is not to convey the idea of its being at the time of his return from that country, or immediately after it; but to distinguish it from that appearance of God to him, in the same place where he now was, in his way thither. He appeared to him at Bethel when he was going to Padan-aram; and now he "appeared to him again," at the

same place, "when he was come out of it."* The whole account given in these verses of the apppearance of God to Jacob, and of his conduct in return, describes a solemn and mutual *renewal of covenant.* There is nothing material in what is here said to him but what had been said before; and nothing material which he did but what had been done before; but the whole was now as it were consolidated and confirmed. 1. God had before told him that his name should be no more called Jacob, but Israel, ch. xxxii. 28: this honor is here *renewed,* and the renewal of it contained an assurance that he should still go on and prevail. 2. God had before declared that the promises made to Abraham should be fulfilled in him and his posterity, ch. xxviii. 13, 14; this declaration is here *renewed* and prefaced with an assertion of his own all-sufficiency to fulfil them. 3. When God had before appeared to him, he set up a pillar of stone, and poured oil upon it, and called the name of the place Bethel, ch. xxviii. 18. 19: this process he now *renewed,* with the addition of a drink-offering, for which on his first journey he probably had not the materials. These renewals of promises and acknowledgments may teach us not to be so anxious after new discoveries as to overlook those which we have already obtained. God may *appear to us* by the revival of known truths, as well as by the discovery of what was unknown; and we may glorify him as much by "doing our first works" as by engaging in something which has not been done before. Old truths, ordinances, and even places, become new to us when we renew communion with God in them.

Ver. 16, 20. We are not told the reason of Jacob's leaving Bethel. Probably he was directed to do so. However this might be, his removal in the present instance was accompanied with a very painful event; namely, the loss of his beloved Rachel, and that in the prime of life. Journeying from Bethel, and within a little of Ephrath, or Bethlehem, she "travailed, and had hard labor." The issue was, the infant was spared but the mother removed. Thus she that had said' "Give me children, or I die," died in childbirth!

Several circumstances which attended this afflictive event are deserving of notice. 1. The words of the midwife: "Fear not: thou shalt have this son also." When Rachel bare her first son she called him Joseph, that is *Adding;* "for," said she, by a prophetic impulse, "the Lord shall add to me another son." It is probably in reference to this that the midwife spake as she did. Her words if reported to Jacob, with the recollection of the above prophetic hint, would raise his hopes and render his loss more affecting, by adding to it the pain of disappointment. They appear to have no influence, however, on Rachel. She has the sentence of death in herself, and makes no answer: but turning her eyes towards the child, and calling him Ben-oni, *the son of my sorrow,* she expires! 2. The terms by which her death is described—"It came to pass, as her soul was in departing." An ordinary historian would have said, as she was dying, or as she was ready to expire: but the Scriptures delight in an impressive kind of phraseology, which at the same time shall both instruct the mind and affect the heart. It was by means of such language, on various occasions, that the doctrine of a future state was known and felt from generation to generation among the Israelites, while the heathen around them, with all their learning, were in the dark upon the subject. 3. The change of the child's name: "She called his name Ben-oni; but his father called him Benjamin." The former, though very appropiate at the time, yet, if continued, must tend perpetually to revive the recollection of the death of his mother; and of such a monitor Jacob did not stand in need. The name given him signified, *the son of my right hand;* that is, a son of the most tender affection and delight, inheriting the place which his mother had formerly possessed in his father's heart. If the love of God be wanting, that of a creature will often be supreme; and, where this is the case, the loss of the object is frequently known to leave the party utterly inconsolable: but though the affection of a good man may be very strong, and his sorrow proportionably deep, yet he is taught to consider that every created good is only lent him: and that, his generation work being as yet unfulfilled, it is not for him to feed melancholy, nor to pore over his loss with a sullenness that shall unfit him for duty, but rather to divert his affections from the object that is taken, and direct them to those that are left. 4. The stone erected to her memory, which appears to have continued for many generations. Burying her in the place where she died, "Jacob set a pillar upon her grave;" and that was the pillar of Rachel's grave when her history was written. It was near this place, if not upon the very spot, that the tribe of Benjamin afterwards had its inheritance; and therefore it is that the people who lived in the times of Jeremiah are called "Rachel's children."—Jer. xxxi. 15. The babes which Herod murdered are also so called; and she herself, though long since dead, is supposed to rise, as it were, out of her grave, and witness the bloody deed, and the singular providence of God

* So the passage is rendered by Ainsworth.

deed: yea, more, to stand upon it and weep, refusing to be comforted, because they were not!

Ver. 21. It is proper that Jacob, or, as he is now called, Israel, after having interred his beloved Rachel, should remove to some little distance, at least from her grave. *The tower of Edar*, near to which he next spread his tent, was in the neighborhood of Bethlehem. In removing, however, from the scene of one sorrow, he is soon overtaken by another. While dwelling in that land, a criminal intercourse took place between Reuben and Bilhah, his father's wife. It was done in secret; but *Israel heard of it.* For this, his unnatural wickedness, Reuben was afterwards cursed as a tribe, the heavier on account of his being the firstborn of the family.—Chap. xlix. 4. By his conduct, however, in reference to his brother Joseph (chap. xxxvii. 20, 22,) he seems to have obtained at least a mitigation of his punishment: for Moses, in blessing the tribes, said of him, "Let Reuben live, and not die, and let not his men be few." Yet even here he does but *live:* no idea is suggested that he should ever *excel*, and with this the history of his tribe, in after ages, perfectly accords.

Ver. 22—26. The history will henceforward principally respect "the sons of Jacob," as being the fathers of the twelve tribes of Israel. We have here, therefore, at the outset, a particular account of them, as descended from the different wives of their father Jacob.

Ver. 27—29. Before the sacred writer, however, proceeds to narrate their history, he furnishes two other subjects, that the thread of the story may not be broken. One of them is the conclusion of the life of Isaac; and the other, which is contained in the thirty-sixth chapter, a brief sketch of the family and temporal prosperity of Esau. If the former of these events had been introduced in the order of time, it would have fallen in the midst of the history of Joseph; for it occurred about twelve or thirteen years after his being sold into Egypt.—There are not many particulars concerning it. Jacob seems to have been sent for just in time to witness his father's decease. By the years of his life, namely, *a hundred and four score*, it appears that he must have lived fifty-seven years in a state of blindness and inactivity. This is one of the mysteries of providence which often strikes us; an aged and afflicted person, whose usefulness appears to us at an end shall have his life prolonged, while a hundred active young people around him shall be cut off. We know not the reason of these things in the present state; but we may know it hereafter.

Chap. xxxvi. With respect to Esau, he and his brother had been together at their father's funeral, and for aught that appears were on brotherly terms. In the course of this chapter we find them separated: not however from any difference arising between them, but on account of their great prosperity. Their riches are said to have been "more than that they might dwell together; and the land wherein they were strangers could not bear them because of their cattle."

The account which is here given of him and his posterity is, however, a kind of leave taken of them: we shall hear no more of Esau, nor of his descendants, but as enemies to the people of God. It is remarkable that three times in this chapter when Esau is spoken of we meet with the phrase "This is Edom;" and twice, "He is Esau, the father of the Edomites."—Verses 1, 8, 9, 19, 43. We have seen that the name of Edom was given him on account of his *sanguinary* disposition (chap. xxv. 24—34;) and as this was notoriously the character of the Edomites, especially towards Israel, it would seem as if the Holy Spirit would have it well remembered that the bitterest enemies of the church of God descended from this man. He seems to be marked as the father of persecutors, in some such manner as Ahaz is marked by his wickedness of another kind, "This is that king Ahaz."—2 Chron. xxviii. 22.

Finally: It is remarkable that Esau, though he had despised and lost his birthright, yet was prospered in his life-time, and for several generations, more than his brother. While the latter was a servant at Padan-aram, he established his dominion in mount Seir; and, while the descendants of the one were groaning under Egyptian bondage, those of the other were formed into an independent kingdom, and had eight kings in succession, *before there reigned any king over the children of Israel.* In this manner did God order things, to show, it may be, that the most valuable blessings require the greatest exercise of faith and patience.

DISCOURSE XLV.

JOSEPH SOLD FOR A SLAVE.

Gen. xxxvii.

We now enter on the very interesting history of Joseph, a history in which I feel not pleasure only but a portion of dismay; and this because I have but little hope of doing justice to it. It is a history, perhaps, unequaled for displaying the various workings of the human mind, both good and

in making use of them for the accomplishment of his purposes.

Ver. 1. Jacob is represented as "dwelling in the land wherein his father was a stranger." The character of sojourners was common to the patriarchs: it is that which Jacob afterwards confessed before Pharaoh; on which the apostle remarks that "they who say such things declare plainly that they seek a country."

Ver. 2. The "generations of Jacob" seem here to mean his family history: so the word is used of Adam, chap. v. 1. And Joseph being, as we should say, the chief hero of the tale, it begins with him. It was the design of the sacred writer, in the course of his narration, to tell of all the great events of that family: as of their going down into Egypt, remaining there for a number of years, and at last being brought out by the mighty hand of God; at present his object is to lead us to the origin of these events, as to the springhead of a great river, or to describe the minute circumstances by which they were brought about.

Joseph was distinguished by his early piety. His brethren were most, if not all of them wicked; and he, being frequently with them in the field, saw and heard such things as greatly affected him. We are not told what they were: the oracles of God have thrown a veil over them till the judgment day. Suffice it for us to know that the mind of this godly youth was hurt by their conversation and behavior, and that he could not be easy without disclosing particulars to his father. In this he was to be commended; for though a child should not indulge, nor be indulged by his parents, in reporting every trivial tale to the disadvantage of his brothers or sisters; yet, where wickedness is acted, it ought not to be concealed. The parents should know it, that they may correct it; or, if that cannot be, that they may be enabled to counteract its effects. But that which was commendable in him produced hatred in them. They would perceive that he did not join them when in company, and perhaps the carriage of their father would lead them to suspect that this his favorite son had been their accuser. In this the outset of Joseph's story, we perceive a striking resemblance between him and our Lord Jesus Christ, whom "the world hated, because he testified of it that the works thereof were evil."

Here, therefore, before I proceed any further, I would offer a few words on the question whether Joseph is to be considered as *a type of Christ*. I am far from thinking that every point of analogy which may be traced by a lively imagination was designed as such by the Holy Spirit; yet neither do I think that we are warranted in rejecting the idea. We have already seen that God prepared the way for the coming of his Son by a variety of *things*, in which the great principles of his undertaking were prefigured, and so rendered familiar to the minds of men (see on ch. vi. 18. xvii. 4): and he pursued the same object by a variety of *persons*, in whom the life and character of Christ were in some degree previously manifest. Thus Milchizedek prefigured him as a priest, Moses as a prophet, and David as a king; and I cannot but think that in the history of Joseph there is a portion of designed analogy between them. But to return—

Ver. 3, 4. The hatred of Joseph's brethren on account of his reports was not diminished, but heightened, by his father's partiality towards him. It is much less difficult to account for this partiality than to justify it, or at least the method of expressing it. He was the son of the beloved Rachel; and, though Benjamin was in this respect equal to him, yet he was but a child, and had as yet developed nothing as to character: he therefore would be out of the question. Joseph seems to have been the only one in the family who had hiterto discovered either the fear of God, or the duty of a child. From these considerations his father might be allowed to love him with a peculiar affection; but his clothing him with "a coat of many colors" was a weakness calculated only to excite envy and ill-will in his brethren. If he had studied to provoke these dispositons, he could scarcely have done it more effectually. The event was, that the hatred of the brothers could no longer be concealed, nor could they speak in the usual strain of civility to Joseph.

Ver. 5—11. Another circumstance occurred which tended still more to heighten the enmity, namely, certain *dreams* which Joseph had at this time, and which he in the simplicity of his heart related to his brethren. These were divine intimations of his future advancement and were remarkably fulfilled in Egypt about twenty-three years afterwards. But at present they inflamed a resentment already too strong; and even his father thought it necessary to chide what seemed a little presumptuous in his son. Yet as Jacob felt a check on this occasion, and *observed the saying*, suspecting, it should seem, that there might be more in it than he was at present aware of, so I apprehend his sons had a secret persuasion that these dreams were prophetic: but that which softened the father only hardened and inflamed the sons. Their hatred had originated in religion; and the thought of God having determined to honor him provoked them the more. Such were the operations of malice

in Cain towards Abel, in Esau towards Jacob, in Saul towards David, and in the Scribes and Pharisees towards the Lord of Glory.

Ver. 12—17. Things now approach fast to a crisis. It seems as if the vale of Hebron, where Jacob now was, did not contain sufficient pasturage for his flocks: the young men therefore take them to Shechem, a distance it is said of about sixty miles, and the place where they lived for the first seven years after their return from Padan-aram. Jacob, feeling anxious about them and the cattle (as well he might, considering the part they had acted there,) proposes to Joseph, that he should go and inquire, and bring him word of their welfare; to which the latter with cheerful obedience consents. Arriving at Shechem, he finds they had left it with the flocks; and being informed by a stranger that they were gone to Dothan a distance of about eight miles, he procceds thither.

Ver. 18—22. The sight of Joseph, while he was yet afar off, rekindles all the foul passions of his brethren, and excites a conspiracy against him. "Behold," say they, with malignant scorn, "this dreamer cometh! Come now, let us slay him!" In some cases sin begins upon a small scale, and increases as it advances; but the very first proposal in this case is murder! This shows the height to which their hatred had been previously wrought up, and which, now that opportunity offered, raged like fire with uncontrollable fury. But have they no apprehensions as to consequences? What tale are they to carry home to their father? O, they are at no loss for this. Malice has two intimate friends always at hand to conceal its dark deeds; namely, artifice and falsehood. "We will cast him into some pit," say they, "and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams!" Who will say that the workers of iniquity have no knowledge? They have all the cunning as well as the cruelty of the old serpent. See how they wrap it up. But what do they mean by that sarcastic saying, "We shall see what will become of his dreams?" If they had consided them as feigned through ambition, they would not have felt half the resentment. No, they would have winked at it as a clever piece of deceit, and have had a fellow feeling for him. I doubt not but they considered these dreams as the intimations of heaven, and their language included nothing less than a challenge of the Almighty! But is it possible; you may say, that they could think of thwarting the divine counsels? It is possible, and certain, that men have been so infatuated by sin as to attempt to do so. Witness Pharaoh's pursuit of Israel, after all that he had seen and felt of the divine judgment; Saul's attempts on David's life; Herod's murder of the children of Bethlehem; and the conspiracy of the Jews against Christ, who, as many of them knew, had raised Lazarus from the dead, and done many miracles. Yes, we will kill him, say they, and then let God advance him to honor if he can! But they *shall* see what will become of his dreams. Yes, they shall see them accomplished, and that by the very means they are concerting to overthrow them. Thus, though "the kings of the earth take counsel together against the Lord, and against his Anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us;" yet "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh at them, the Lord shall have them in derision." Joseph's brethren, like the sheaves in the dream, shall make obeisance to him; and "at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that he is Lord, unto the glory of God the Father."

In this bloody council there was one dissentient. God put it into the heart of Reuben, though in other respects none of the best of characters, to oppose their measures; and, being the elder brother, his opinion must have somewhat the greater weight. He appears to have utterly disapproved of their intention, and wished earnestly to get the lad safe out of their hands, that he might deliver him to his father; though perhaps through fear of his own life he made only a partial opposition. His counsel, however, saved his life, and he was doubtless raised up on this occasion for the very purpose; for Joseph's time was not yet come.

Ver. 22—24. All that had hitherto taken place was during the time that Joseph was absent. Glad to have caught the sight of them, he was walking towards them in the simplicity of his heart, while they were taking counsel to destroy him! He arrives. Like beasts of prey, they immediately seize him, and tear off the envied "coat of many colors." It was not enough to injure him; they must also insult him. Thus Jesus was stripped and degraded before he suffered. Now it was, as they afterwards confessed one to another in the Egyptian prison, that they "saw the anguish of his soul when he besought them, and they would not hear:" now it was that Reuben interceded on his behalf, saying, "Do not sin against the child; but they would not hear."—Chap. xlii. 21, 22. No, they would not hear: "they took and cast him into a pit:" probably a hole in the earth, both dark and deep; for he does not appear to have been able to get out again. It was however empty,

or without water. Whether they knew of this circumstance or not, God knew it: and it seems to have been known to Reuben when he made the proposal of his being cast into it, seeing he hoped by this means to save his life.

Ver. 25—28. Having thus far gratified their revenge, they retire, and with hardened unconcern "sit down to eat bread." It is probable that they both ate and drank, and made merry; and it may be partly in allusion to this that certain characters, in the times of the prophet Amos, are described as drinking wine in bowls, and anointing themselves with the chief ointments, but were "not grieved for the affliction of Joseph."

At this juncture appeared a company of merchants, who were going down to Egypt. They are called Ishmaelites, and also Midianites: they were it seems a mixed people, composed of both. On the sight of them a thought occurs to the mind of Judah, that they had better sell their brother for a slave than murder him, which he proposes to the rest. His proposal contains words of mercy, but it was mercy mixed with covetousness. I am not sure that Judah felt any tenderness towards Joseph, as being his "brother, and of his flesh," any more than his namesake did in selling Christ: it is not unusual for covetous men to urge their objects under a show of generosity and kindness. But, if he did, it was the profit that wrought upon the company. The love of money induced them to sell their brother for a slave; and the same principle carries on the same cruel traffic to this day. So they sold Joseph for "twenty pieces of silver," the value of which was about twenty shillings of our money, ten shillings less than the price of a slave.—Exod. xxi 32 A goodly price at which they valued him! But let not Joseph complain, seeing a greater than he was sold by Judas Iscariot for but a little more.

Ver. 29, 30. During this iniquitous transaction Reuben was absent. I suppose, while they were eating and drinking, he stole away from their company, with the intention of going by himself to the pit and delivering Joseph; and to the pit he went; but taking a circuitous course it may be to prevent suspicion, he was too late! At this he is greatly affected, rends his garments, returns to the company and exclaims, "The child is not: and I, whither shall I go?" But though he spoke like a brother, and an elder brother, who was obliged to give account to his father, yet it appears to have made no impression on them. Like the scribes and Pharisees, they were ready to answer, "See thou to that!"

Ver. 31—36. They feel not for Joseph, nor for Reuben; but have some concern about themselves, and immediately fall upon a stratagem wherewith to deceive their father. A kid is slain, and the coat of Joseph is dipped in its blood. This is to be carried home, and shown to Jacob, with the addition of a lie, saying they had "found" it; and thus the poor old man was to be persuaded that some evil beast had devoured him. Who will say that the workers of iniquity have no knowledge? Yet one cannot but remark the difficulty of supporting a feigned character. To have done it completely, they should first have seen their father without the coat, broke it to him by degrees, affected to grieve with him for the loss, and at last have presented the coat with apparent reluctance; as that which must harrow up his feelings. Instead of this, the whole is done in the most unfeeling and undutiful manner that it could be: "This have we found," say they, "know now whether it be *thy* son's coat, or no!" They could not deny themselves the brutal pleasure of thus insulting their father even in the hour of his distress, for his former partiality. Wicked dispositions often make men act like fools: hence it is that murderers commonly betray themselves. The disguise of hypocrisy is generally very thin: truth only is throughout consistent. This disguise, however thin as it was, seemed to answer the end. Jacob knew the bloody garment, and said, "It is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him: Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces." No, it is no evil beast, but men more cruel than tigers that have done towards him what is done: but thus Jacob thought, and thus he mourned. We are ready to wonder how Reuben could keep his counsel; yet with all his grief he did so: perhaps he might be afraid for his own life. Whatever was the cause, however, of Jacob's being thus imposed upon, it was wisely ordered that he should be so. The present concealment of many things contributes not a little to the accomplishment of the divine counsels, and to the augmentation of future joy.

Jacob's mourning is deep and durable: when after a time, his sons and his sons' wives rose up to comfort him, he refused to be comforted; resolving to die a mourner, and to welcome the grave, which, though a land of darkness, should be dear to him, because his beloved Joseph was there! "Thus his father wept for him."

From the whole, one sees already with admiration the astonishing machinery of providence. The malignant brothers seem to have obtained their ends; the mercenary merchants, who care not what they deal in, so that they get gain, have also obtained theirs; and Potiphar, having got a fine young slave, has obtained his. But, what is of greater importance, God's designs are

by these means all in train for execution. This event shall issue in Israel's going down to Egypt; that in their deliverance by Moses; that in the setting up of the true religion in the world; and that in the spread of it among all nations by the gospel. "The wrath of man shall praise the Lord, and the remainder thereof will he restrain."

DISCOURSE XLVI.

THE CONDUCT OF JUDAH—JOSEPH'S PROMOTION AND TEMPTATION.

Gen. xxxviii. xxxix.

If we turn aside with the sacred writer for a few minutes, and notice the conduct of Judah about this time, we shall perceive new sources of sorrow for the poor old patriarch. This young man, whatever was the cause, must needs leave his father's family; and, wandering towards the south, he entered into the house of one Hirah, an inhabitant of Adullam, with whom he formed an intimate acquaintance. If all the brethren had dispersed and mingled among the heathen, if we consider only their state of mind, there had been nothing surprising in it. While tarrying here, he saw a young female, whose father's name was Shuah; and though he had joined in objecting to his sister's marriage with Shechem, yet he makes no scruple of taking this Canaanitish woman to be his wife; and that without consulting his father. The children which he had by this marriage were such as might be expected; and the loose life which he himself led, aided in it as he was by his *friend* the Adullamite, was that of a man who, weary of the restraints of religion, had given himself up to his evil propensities.

Yet it is observable how he keeps up the customs of his father's family, by directing his younger son to take the widow of the eldest, that he might raise up seed unto his brother; and, though he himself indulged in licentiousness, yet he can feel indignation and even talk of *burning* his daughter-in-law for the same thing. Thus we have often seen men tenacious of ceremonies, while living in the grossest immorality, and quick to censure the faults of others while blinded to their own.

The odious wickedness committed in this family might not have been recorded but for the purpose of chronology, and to show what human nature is till it is renewed by the grace of God. How this connection between Judah and his friend the Adullamite came to be broken we know not; but, finding him afterwards in his father's house, we hope it was so.—Even while he continued on that side of the country he had some remorse of conscience, particularly when he discovered the supposed harlot to be his daughter Tamar. "She hath been," said he "more righteous than I."

But we return to the history of Joseph—

Chap. xxxix. We left him in Egypt, sold to Potiphar, a captain of the guard; and here we find him. He was sent beforehand as a Saviour; and, like the Saviour of the world, was not sent in state, but in the form of a servant.

Nothing is said of the grief of mind which he felt on the occasion, but this must needs have been great. A youth of seventeen, torn from his father, enslaved to all appearance for life, and that among idolaters, where the true God was utterly unknown! If the day of Jacob's departure from his father's house was "the day of his distress" ch. xxxv. 3, what must Joseph's have been? The archers may well be said to have "sorely grieved him."

Ver. 2, 3. But here is a remedy equal to this or any other disease: "The Lord was with Joseph!" God can make up any loss, sustain under any load, and render us blessed in any place. To this Moses alludes in his dying blessing upon the tribe of Joseph: "Blessed of the Lord be his land, for the precious things of heaven—for the precious things of earth"—and for the "good will of him that dwelt in the bush: let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren!" If we be but in the path of duty, we have nothing to fear. Whatever wrongs we suffer, if we be but kept from doing wrong we shall enjoy the peace of God in our hearts, and all will come to a good issue. What a difference is there between the cases of Joseph and Jonah! They were both in trouble, both absent from God's people, both among the heathen: but the sufferings of the one was for righteousness' sake, while those of the other were of his own procuring.

God makes Joseph *prosperous*. He must then have submited with cheerfulness to his lot, studied to make himself agreeable and useful to his master, and applied attentively to business. Herein he was an example of resignation to the will of God in afflictive circumstances. Fretfulness greatly aggravates the ills of life, while a cheerful submission to the will of God alleviates them. The prosperity attending Joseph was *manifest*: his master sees it, and sees that "Jehovah is with him," and that it is his hand which blesses all he does. This is a circumstance not a little to Joseph's honor; for it implies that he made no secret of his religion. He must have refused to join in Egyptian idolatry, and avowed himself a

worshipper of Jehovah, the only true God. In many cases, for a poor unprotected slave to have done this, would have cost him his life; but the Lord was with Joseph, and had all hearts in his hand. Potiphar observing that the religion of the young man turned to his account, like many irreligious masters in the present day, makes no objection to it. This holds up a most encouraging example to religious servants to recommend the gospel by their fidelity and diligence; and to all Christians to be faithful to God even when there are no religious friends about them to watch over them. This is walking with God.

Ver. 4 The effect of this is, Joseph comes into favor, and is promoted over all the other servants. From a slave he is made a steward; a steward not only of the household, but over all his master's affairs, and this though but a youth.

Ver. 5. And now, as Potiphar favors the Lord's servant, the Lord will not be behindhand with him, but will favor him.

From this time forward every thing is blessed and prospered for "Joseph's sake." We see here that it is good to be connected with them that fear God, but much better to cast in our lot with them. In that case we shall not only gain by them for this life, but, as Moses told Hobab, whatever good thing the Lord doth to them shall be done to us. Here also we see the promise to Abraham fulfilled in his posterity: he not only blesses them, but "makes them a blessing." Such was Jacob to Laban; such is Joseph to Potiphar, and afterwards to all Egypt; and such has Israel been to the world, who from them derive a Saviour, and all that they possess of true religion. Even the casting away of them has proved the reconciling of the world, and how much more shall the receiving of them at a future day be as life from the dead! It might also be the design of God, by this as well as other of his proceedings, to set forth under a figure the method in which he would bless the world; namely, "for the sake of another that was dear unto him." Potiphar was not blessed for his own sake, or on account of any of his good deeds; but for the sake of Joseph. Even his receiving Joseph into favour was not *that on account of which* he was blessed, though that was necessary to it; it was *Joseph* to whom the eye of the Lord was directed he looked on him, and blessed Potiphar. So *that for the sake of which* we are accepted and saved is not any work of righteousness which we have done, nor even our believing in Christ, though this is necessary to it; but the name and righteousness of Jesus. Thus, in both cases, grace is displayed, and boasting excluded. Finally: It was a proverb in Israel that, "when it goeth well with the righteous, the city rejoiceth." This was singularly exemplified in the prosperity of Joseph, and still more in the exaltation of Christ. From the day that he was made head over all principalities and powers, from that time forward the Lord hath blessed the world *for his sake.*

Ver. 6. So great was the confidence which Joseph's fidelity inspired in his master, that all his concerns were left in his hands; and for his own part he did nothing but enjoy the prosperity which was thus bestowed upon him. This circumstance might be wisely ordered to prepare this lovely youth for his future station. He was now brought into business, and inured to management; had he been raised to his last post first, he might have been less qualified to fill it. Sudden advancements are seldom safe.

Under all this prosperity, what may we suppose to be the state of Joseph's mind? No doubt his thoughts would some times glance to the vale of Hebron, and he would ask himself, "How does my father bear the rending stroke; and what is become of my poor wicked brethren? But as to himself, so far as it was possible to be happy in a strange land, happy he must have been. God was with him, every thing he did prospered, and every thing he met with was extremely flattering. Indeed, there are few characters who, at his period of life especially, could bear such a tide of success. We see in him nothing assuming or overbearing towards his fellow-servants, nor forgetful of his God. If, however, any thing of this kind should have been at work in his heart, he will soon meet with that which shall recall him to a right mind. A sharp temptation approaches, in which his virtue and patience shall be put to the proof. After a day of prosperity, let us expect a day of adversity; for "God hath set the one over against the other," even in the lot of his most favored servants.

Ver. 7--9. Joseph's goodly and well favored countenance excites the lawless desires of a faithless woman, who, in violation of her marriage vows, and of all the modesty and decency which should distinguish her sex, tries to seduce him. In such a situation, how many young men would have been carried away! Nay, how many are so where the temptation is far less powerful! His conduct on this occasion is a proof of great grace, and exhibits to all posterity an example of what may be done by closely walking with God.

The first attack upon him is repelled with a modest but severe remonstrance, exactly suited to his situation. Let us examine it minutely. There are four things in it worthy of admiration. 1. He is silent with respect to the wickedness of the tempt

er. He might have reproached her for the indelicacy, the infidelity, and the baseness of her proposal: but he confines himself to what respected *his own* obligation, and what would be *his own* sin. In the hour of temptation it is enough for us to look to ourselves. It is remarkable that all our Lord's answers to the tempter, as recorded in the fourth chapter of Matthew, are in this way. He could have accused him of insolence and outrage; but he barely refuses to follow his counsels, because thus and thus *it was written*. 2. Joseph considers his obligation as rising in proportion to his station: "There is none greater in this house than I." Some young men would have drawn a contrary conclusion from the same premises, and on this ground have thought themselves entitled to take the greater liberties; but this is the true use to be made of power, and riches, and every kind of trust. 3. He considers it as heightened by the generosity and kindness of his master, who withheld nothing else from him. Eve reasoned at first on this principle, ch. iii. 2; and, had she kept to it, she had been safe. When we are tempted to covet what God has forbidden, it were well to think of the many things which he has not forbidden, but freely given us. 4. He rises from created to uncreated authority: It would not only be treachery to my master, but "wickedness," "great wickedness, and sin against God." In the hour of temptation it is of infinite importance what view we take of the evil to which we are tempted. If we suffer our thoughts to dwell on its agreeableness, as Eve did concerning the forbidden fruit, its sinfulness will insensibly diminish in our sight, a number of excuses will present themselves, and we shall inevitably be carried away by it: but if we keep our eye steadfastly, on the holy will of God, and the strong obligations we are under to him, that which would otherwise appear a little thing will be accounted what it is, a *great wickedness*, and we shall revolt at the idea of sinning against him. This is the armor of God, wherewith we shall stand in the evil day.

Ver. 10. This remonstrance, however, strong as it was, has no lasting effect upon the woman: for sin, and this sin in particular, is outrageous in its operations. Joseph therefore finds it necessary to shun her company, carefully avoiding, as much as possible, to be with her any where alone. This showed, First, *great sincerity*; for if we throw ourselves in the way of temptation, or be not careful to shun it when occasions offer, in vain do we talk against sin. Secondly, *great wisdom;* for, though he had been kept hitherto, he was not sure that he should be so in future. Thirdly, *great resolution and perseverance*; for it is not every one who withstands a temptation in the first instance, that holds out to the end. Eve repelled the tempter on his first onset, but was carried away by the second. Job endured a series of trials, and sinned not; yet afterwards spake things which he ought not. Finally, *great grace*. "Can a man go on hot coals, and his feet not be burned?" No; if we voluntarily *go* into temptation, we shall assuredly be hurt, if not ruined by it; but when God by his providence *leads* us into it, for the trial of our graces, we may hope to be kept in it, and brought victorious out of it.

Ver. 11—20. If we were told of a young man in Joseph's situation, we should probably advise his leaving the family; but, circumstanced as he was, that might be impossible. He was a bought servant, however exalted, and therefore was not at liberty to leave. Nor could he speak on the subject to his master without ruining his peace forever. He therefore kept it to himself and went on as well as he could, watching and praying, no doubt, lest he should enter into temptation. One day, being under the necessity of going into the house about business, his mistress renewed her solicitations; on which he fled from her presence as before; but, as he was escaping, she caught a piece of his garment, and kept it by her. Wantonness being disappointed, and pride wounded, the whole is now turned into hatred and revenge. She will work his overthrow, that she will! Mark how the cunning of the old serpent operates. The servants are called in to witness how she had been mocked, or, as we should say, insulted by this Hebrew. If they knew nothing from other quarters, it was very natural they should think it was so; and thus they were every thing but eye-witnesses of Joseph's guilt. Presumptive evidence is certainly very strong against him. Yet, with all this cunning, like other hypocrites, she does not do it completely. She should have pretended how much she felt for the insult offered to her husband, as well as to herself: but the truth will come out, after all the pains taken to conceal it. How disrespectfully she speaks of him to the servants, half attributing the pretended insult to him. "See," saith she, "*he* hath brought an Hebrew in unto us to mock us!" Such language not only betrayed the alienation of her heart from her husband, but tended to set the servants against him. Nothing but truth is consistent throughout. If these servants possessed only a moderate share of good sense, they must have seen through this thin disguise, whether they chose to speak their minds or not.

The scheme however took. Potiphar thought the story so plausible that there

could be no doubt of its being true. His wrath therefore was kindled, and without further ceremony he took Joseph and committed him to prison. Being fired with anger, he had no ear to hear what could be said on the other side; and perhaps Joseph might think that nothing he could say would be regarded; or, if it were, it must ruin his master's peace of mind: he would therefore go in silence to prison, trusting in God to vindicate his injured character.

But what an affecting reverse of condition! Poor young man! A stranger in a strange land, without a friend to speak for him or to care about him. Behold him confined in the dungeon, and think what must have been his reflections.—Oh, if my father knew of this what would he feel on my account! How mysterious are the ways of providence, that, by an inflexible adherence to righteousness, I should be brought into this horrid place!—He was not only confined in a *dungeon*, but, as we are told in the 105 Psalm, "his feet were hurt with fetters, being laid in iron." The last phrase is very emphatic. Calvin renders it, "The iron entered into his soul." Not only were his feet galled, but his heart was grieved; and probably he expected nothing but death.

Ver. 21—23. But, as under his former affliction, so under this, "the Lord was with Joseph." What was once said to Abraham might now be said to him: "I am God all-sufficient: walk before me, and be thou perfect." All will be right at last. Where providence leads us into difficulties and hardships, grace can sustain us under them: and if we suffer for righteousness' sake, as Joseph did, we may be assured it will be so. Nothing shall eventually harm us, if we be followers of that which is good. In a little time, Joseph obtains favor in the eyes of the keeper of the prison, as he had done before in those of Potiphar. And now he has an opportunity of showing the power of true religion in the prison, by his fidelity, his tenderness, and his worship of the only true God. It might be wisely ordered, too, that he should go into his high station by way of a prison; he might not otherwise have been so well qualified to feel for his brethren, and for other prisoners. Nor would he have been in the way of his future advancement, if he had not been there. "Before honor is humility." The Lord of glory himself obtained not the crown, but by first enduring the cross.

DISCOURSE XLVII.

JOSEPH IN PRISON.

Gen. xl.

We left Joseph in prison; but, by the good hand of God upon him, its hardships are greatly mitigated. At first he is thrown into a dungeon, and laid in irons; but now he is made a kind of steward, or overseer of the other prisoners. Yet it is a prison still, and he desires to be free; but he must wait awhile. God will deliver him in his own time and way. This chapter contains the story of the means by which his deliverance was effected.

Ver. 1, 2. Two of Pharaoh's officers offend their lord, for which they are committed to prison—the chief butler and the chief baker. Whether they suffered justly for having attempted to poison the king, which was often done in heathen countries, or merely on account of unfounded suspicion; whether, if there were any thing actually attempted, it was *their* doing, or that of some of the under butlers and bakers, for whose conduct they might be responsible, we know not; but imprisoned they were.

Ver. 3, 4. The prison into which they were sent is called the house of "the captain of the guard." This title is more than once before given to Potiphar.—Ch. xxxvii. 36, xxxix. 1. It is probable that he had the chief oversight of the prison, and that the keeper was a person employed under him. If so, it seems likely that Potiphar was reconciled to Joseph. There is little reason to think that his wife would long conceal her character; and that being known would operate in Joseph's favor: and though he might not wish to release him out of prison, for his own credit, yet he might be induced to connive at the keeper's kindness to him. It is remarkable that the prison to which these persons were sent should be the same as that wherein Joseph was confined. In this we see the hand of God ordering all events. They might have been sent to another place of confinement; but then the chain had been broken. On how many little incidents, of which the parties at the time think nothing, do some of the greatest events depend! If they had gone to another prison, Joseph might have died where he was, and no provision have been made for the seven years of famine; and Jacob and his family, with millions of others have perished for want; and so all the promises of their becoming a great nation, and of the Messiah springing from among them, and all nations being blessed in him, would have been frustrated. But he that appoints the end, appoints all the

means that shall lead to it; and not one of them, however small or incidental, shall be dispensed with. In this prison Joseph is said to have *served* the chief butler and the chief baker; that is, he carried them their daily provisions, and so was in the habit of seeing them every day, and conversing with them.

Ver. 5—8. One morning, when he went to carry them their usual food, he finds them more than ordinarily dejected, and kindly inquires into the reason of it. It appears hence that Joseph was not a hard-hearted overseer. Unlike many petty officers, whose overbearing conduct towards their inferiors is most intolerable, he sympathises with the sorrowful, and makes free with them. The fear of God produces tenderness of heart, and compassion towards men, especially to the poor and the afflicted. On enquiry, he found that they had each had a *dream*, which, by the circumstances attending it, they considered as extraordinary. Both of them dreamed, and both in one night; both their dreams related to their past employments, and seemed therefore to be ominous of their future destiny: yet they knew not what to make of them, and had no interpreter at hand who could instruct them. Such was the cause of their dejection. Though the greater part of dreams be vanity, yet in all ages and places God has sometimes impressed the mind of man by these means; and especially, it would seem, in countries which have been destitute of divine revelation. We have many instances of this in the book of Daniel, and by which, as in this case, the servants of God came into request, and the glory of God eclipsed the powers of idolatry.

But what kind of interpreters did these men wish for? Such, no doubt, as Pharaoh, on his having dreamed, called for; namely, the magicians and the wise men of Egypt: and, because they had no hopes of obtaining them in their present situation, therefore were they sad. Here lies the force of Joseph's question: "Do not interpretations belong to God?" which was a reproof to them for looking to their magicians instead of to him: hence also he offered himself, as the servant of God, to be their interpreter.

It is worthy of notice that, what Joseph's interpretation was to the dreams of the butler and the baker, that the oracles of God are, to the notices and impressions on the human mind by the light of nature and conscience. Man in every age and country has felt in himself a consciousness of his being what he ought not to be, a fearfulness of having in another state to give an account, with many other things of the kind; but all is uncertainty. He only knows enough, if he regard it not, to render him inexcusable; and, if he regard it, to make him miserable. It is only in the Scriptures that the mind of God is revealed.

Ver. 9—15. The butler first tells his dream, which Joseph interprets of his deliverance and restoration to office; and, having told him this good news, he very naturally throws in a request on behalf of himself. There is no proof or symptom of impatience in this; but patience itself may consist with the use of all lawful means to obtain deliverance. The terms in which this request is made are modest, and exceedingly impressive: "Think on me when it shall be well with thee, and show kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house." He might have asked for a place under the chief butler, or some other post of honor or profit: but he requests only to be delivered from "this house."—He might have reminded the butler how much he owed to his sympathetic and kind treatment: but he left these things to speak for themselves, using no other language than that of humble entreaty: "I pray thee show kindness unto me!" In pleading the exalted situation in which the chief butler was about to be reinstated, he gently intimates the obligations which people in prosperous circumstances are under to think of the poor and the afflicted; and Christians may still farther improve the principle, not to be unmindful of such cases in their approaches to the King of kings.—This plea may also direct us to make use of His name and interest who is exalted at the right hand of the Majesty on high. It was on this principle that the dying thief presented his petition: "Lord, remember me, when thou comest into thy kingdom." A petition which the Lord of glory did neither refuse nor forget: and still he liveth to make intercession for us.

Joseph, in order to make a deeper impression upon the butler's mind, tells him a few of the outlines of his history: "I was *stolen*," says he, "from the land of the Hebrews." but was this a *just* account? Did not the Ishmaelites *buy* him? They did; but it was of them who had no right to sell him, and therefore it was in reality stealing him. Such, you know, would be the purchase of a child by a kidnapper of an unprincipled nurse; and such is the purchase of slaves to this day on the coast of Africa.

The account was not only just but *generous*. In making use of the term *stolen*, without any mention of particulars, he seems to have intended to throw a veil over the cruelty of his brethren, whom he did not wish to reproach to a stranger; and the same generous spirit is discovered in what he says of his treatment in Egypt. We have seen in a former discourse how this

great and good man refused to reproach his tempter, confining himself to what was his own duty; and now, when he had suffered so much through her base and false treatment, and when it might have been thought necessary to expose her in order to justify himself, he contents himself with asserting his own innocence: "And here also have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon." What an example is here afforded us of temperateness and forbearance, under the foulest and most injurious treatment! Such was Joseph's request; and such his pleas to enforce it. If there had been any gratitude, any bowels of mercy, or any justice in the butler's heart, surely he must have thought of these things.

Ver. 16—19. But, before telling us the issue of the above, the sacred writer informs us of the request of the baker. Observing the success of his companion, he is encouraged to tell his dream also; but here is a sad reverse. In three days his life will be taken from him! Whether, he would suffer justly or unjustly we know not; but, as his death was so near, it was an advantage for him to know it: and, if he had been properly affected, he had now an opportunity of inquiring at the hand of a servant of God concerning his eternal salvation.

Ver. 20—23. The third day after these things, being Pharaoh's birth-day, both these prisoners were brought forth.—Whether they were put to a formal trial, or whether their fate was determined by the mere will of the king, we are not informed; but the chief butler was reinstated in his office, and the chief baker hanged, according to the word of the Lord by his servant Joseph.

We should now have expected to read of the chief butler's intercession to the king in behalf of an amiable and injured young Hebrew, whom he had met with in prison. But instead of this we are told, "Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgat him!" Alas, what a selfish creature is man! How strangely does prosperity intoxicate and drown the mind. How common is it for people in high life to forget the poor, even those to whom they have been under the greatest obligations! Well, be it so; Joseph's God did not forget him: and we amidst all the neglects of creatures, may take comfort in this, Jesus does not neglect us. Though exalted far above all principalities and powers, he is not elated with his glory, so as to forget his poor suffering people upon earth. Only let us be concerned not to forget him. He who needs not our esteem, as we do his, hath yet in love condescended to ask us to do thus and thus *in remembrance of him!*

DISCOURSE XLVIII.

JOSEPH'S ADVANCEMENT.

Gen. xli.

Ver. 1—14. "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick." It is not the intenseness of our trials, but the duration of them, that is the greatest test of patience. "Two full years" longer must Joseph remain in prison. How long he was at the house of Potiphar, before he was sent to this dismal place, I do not recollect that we are informed; but we learn that it was thirteen years in the whole: for when he came out of Canaan he was but seventeen, and he was thirty when he stood before Pharaoh.

God seldom makes haste to accomplish his designs. His movements, like those of a comet, fetch a large compass, but all comes right at last. The time is now come for Joseph's advancement, and God makes way for it by causing Pharaoh himself to dream. Abraham made a point of not laying himself under obligation to the king of Sodom; and, though Joseph in the grief of his soul would gladly have been obliged to both Pharaoh and the butler for his deliverance, yet God will so order it that he shall be obliged to neither of them.

Pharaoh shall send for him: but it shall be for *his own sake.* Though a poor friendless young man himself, yet he is a servant of the great King, and must maintain the honor of his Lord. It might be for this that God suffered the butler to forget him, that he might not take from a thread to a shoelatchet what was theirs, and that the king of Egypt might not have to say, I have made Israel rich. Abraham and his posterity were made to impart blessedness to mankind rather than to receive it from them. If it be more blessed to give than to receive, theirs it is to be thus blessed and thus honored. Oh, the depth of the wisdom and goodness of God; not only in giving, but in withholding his gifts till the time when they shall best subserve the ends for which they are conferred!

And now, that the set time to Joseph is come, events rise in quick succession. Pharoh's mind is impressed with an extraordinary dream—the same is repeated in another form—each appears to portend something of importance—his spirit is troubled—he sends for his magicians and wise men, but their wisdom fails them—all are nonplused—what is to be done?—Just now it occurs to the butler that this had once been his own case.—Oh, and I have forgotten my kind and worthy friend! Stupid creature! That is the man for the king.—Obtaining an audience, he confesses the whole truth, and ingenuously ac-

kuowledges his faults.—Joseph is now sent for in haste.—He shaves himself, changes his raiment, and obeys the summons. Thus, in a few hours, he is delivered from the dungeon, and introduced to the court of what was then perhaps the first nation upon earth. Were we unacquainted with the event, with what anxious solicitude should we follow him; and, even as it is, we cannot wholly divest ourselves of these feelings.

Ver. 15—24. Being introduced to the king, he is told for what cause he is sent for. "I have," said Pharaoh, "dreamed a dream, and there is none that can interpret it: and I have heard say of thee that thou canst understand a dream, to interpret it." The meaning of this was, that he had a case in hand which baffled all the wise men of Egypt, but that, from what he had heard of Joseph, he supposed he might be a wiser man, or more deeply skilled in occult science, than any of them. Such a compliment from a king would have been too much for a vain mind: if he had affected to disclaim superior wisdom, it would have been done in a manner which betrayed what lurked within. But Joseph feared God; and is the same man in a palace as in a prison. "It is not in me," said he; "God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace." In this brief answer we see a spirit of genuine *humility*, disclaiming all that kind of wisdom for which Pharaoh seemed very willing to give him credit, or indeed any other, but what God gave him. We see also a *disinterested concern to glorify the true God*, in the face of the mightiest votaries of idolatry, who had power to do what they pleased with him. It is observable, he does not say the God of Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob, or the God of the Hebrews. Such language might have been understood by Pharaoh and his courtiers as setting up one titular deity in opposition to others, the God of his country against the gods of Egypt: but he simply says GOD; a term which would lead their thoughts to the One great Supreme, before whom all idols would fall to the ground. Thus, with great wisdom, modesty, and firmness, he states truth, and leaves error to fall of its own accord. In assuring Pharaoh that God would give him an answer of *peace*, he would remove all fear from his mind of an unfavorable interpretation, which, from the butler's report, he might have some reason to apprehend; inasmuch as though he had foretold his restoration to office, yet he had prophetically hanged the chief baker.

Pharaoh's mind being thus relieved and encouraged, he without further hesitation proceeds to tell his dreams of the fat and lean-fleshed kine, and of the rank and withered ears of corn.

Ver. 25—31. The answer of Joseph is worthy of the man of God. You perceive no shuffling to gain time, no juggling, no peeping and muttering, no words of dark or doubtful meaning: all is clear as light, and explicit as the day.—The dreams are one; and they were sent of God to forewarn the king of what he would shortly bring to pass. The seven good kine, and the seven ears, are seven years of plenty; and the seven evil kine, and thin ears, are seven years of famine. And the reason of the dream being doubled is to express its certainty, and the near approach of the events signified by it.

Ver. 32—36. Having made the matter plain, and so relieved the king's mind, he does not conclude without offering a word of counsel; the substance of which was to provide, from the surplus of the seven good years, for the supply of the seven succeeding ones. If he had only interpreted Pharaoh's dreams, he might have gratified his curiosity, but that had been all. Knowledge is of but little use, any farther than as it is converted into practice.

With respect to the advice itself, it carried with it its own recommendation. It was no more than what common prudence would have dictated to any people. If they had doubted Joseph's interpretation of the dreams, and whether any such years of plenty and of scarcity would follow, yet they could not, even upon this supposition, object to his counsel: for nothing was to be expended, nor done, but upon the actual occurrence of the plenteous years; which, as they were to come first, afforded an opportunity of which wisdom would have availed itself, if there had been no dreams in the case, to provide for a time of want. Nor is there any reason, from what we know of Joseph's character, to suspect him of interested designs, like those of Haman, who wished to recommend himself. He appears to have had no end in view but the good of the country where God had caused him to sojourn.

Ver. 37, 38. Happily for Egypt, Pharaoh and his ministry saw the propriety of what was offered, and readily came into it. It is a sign that God has mercy in store for that people whose rulers are open to receive good counsel, and know how to appreciate the worth of good men. As Joseph had recommended a wise man to be employed in the business, Pharaoh without farther hesitation appeals to his courtiers, whether any man in Egypt was so fit for the work as himself,—a man who had not only proved himself wise in counsel, but had also intercourse with GOD, and was inspired of him to reveal the secrets of futurity. Such language proves that Joseph's mentioning the true God to Pharaoh had not been without effect. To this, however, the courtiers make no answer. If they felt

a little jealous of this young foreigner, it were not to be wondered at. Such were the feelings of the Babylonish nobles towards Daniel. It were easier to see the goodness of the counsel which left a hope to each man of a new office, than to see that Joseph was the only man in the land that could execute it. They knew very well that they had not, like him, "the Spirit of God;" but might think themselves capable, nevertheless, of managing this business. However, they silently acquiesce; and Pharaoh proceeds without delay to carry his purposes into effect.

Ver. 39—45. And now all power, except that which is supreme, is put into his hands, over the house and over the nation; and, as the courtiers had probably discovered a secret reluctance, Pharaoh repeats his determination the more earnestly, that, as the dream had been repeated to him, the thing might be established, and immediately put in execution. To words were added *signs*, which tended to fix his authority in the minds of the people. The king took his ring from his hand, and put it upon the hand of Joseph, clothed him in fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck. Nor was this all: he caused him to ride in the second chariot through the streets of the city, and that it should be proclaimed before him, "Bow the knee," or "Tender father." The Chaldee translates it, as Ainsworth observes, "The father of the king, master in wisdom, and tender in years;"—as who should say, Though a youth in age, yet a father in character. In addition to this, Pharaoh uses a very solemn form of speech, such as that which is prefixed or affixed to many of the divine commands: "I am Pharaoh;" and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt!—See Lev. xix. Finally, to crown him with respect, he gave him a new name, the meaning of which was, *a revealer of secrets;* and the daughter of a priest, or prince to be his wife. Pause a moment, my brethren, and reflect . . . . Who, in reading the preceding sufferings and present advancement of Joseph, can forbear, thinking of HIM who, "for the suffering of death, was crowned with glory and honor—whom God hath highly exalted, giving him a name which is above every name; that at the name of JESUS every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father?" Surely it was the design of God, by these sweet analogies, to lead the minds of believers imperceptibly on, that when the Messiah should come, they might see him in perfection, in their Josephs, their Joshuas, and Davids, as well as in their sacrifices, their cities of refuge, and their Jubilees.

Ver. 46—49. Joseph, being thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh, was just suited for active life. At such a period, however, and raised from such a situation, many would have been lifted up to their hurt: but He who enabled him to repel temptation, and endure affliction, enabled him also to bear the glory that was conferred upon him with humility. It is observable that, on going out from the presence of Pharaoh, he did not go hither and thither to show his greatness; but immediately betook himself to business. New honors, in his account, conferred new obligations. The first thing necessary for the execution of his trust was a general survey of the country; which having taken, he proceeded to execute his plan, laying up grain during the seven plentiful years beyond all calculation.

Ver. 50—52. During these years of plenty, Joseph had two sons by his wife Asenath, both which are significantly named, and express the state of his mind in his present situation. The first he called *Manasseh*, that is, *forgetting;* "for God," said he, "hath made me to forget all my toil, and all my father's house." A change from the extremes of either joy to sorrow or sorrow to joy is expressed by the term *forgetfulness:* and a very expressive term it is. "Thou hast removed my soul far off from peace: I *forgot* prosperity.—A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hours is come; but as soon as she is delivered, she *remembereth no more* the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world." But what, had Joseph forgotten his father's house? Yes, so far as it had been an affliction to him; that is, he had forgotten the cruel treatment of his brethren, so as no longer to lay it to heart. His second son he called *Ephraim*, that is, made fruitful; "for God," said he, "hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction!" In both he eyes the hand of God in doing every thing for him, and gives the glory to him only.

Ver. 53—57. But now the day of prosperity to Egypt is at an end, and the day of adversity cometh: "God hath set the one over against the other, to sweep away its fulness, that man should find nothing after him. And now the people, being famished for want of bread, resorted to Pharaoh. Had not Pharaoh been warned of this evil beforehand, he might have replied as Jehoram did to her that cried, "Help, my lord, O king.—If the Lord do not help thee, whence shall I help thee? Out of the barn-floor, or out of the wine press?" But provision was made for this time of need; and the people are all directed to "go to

Joseph." And here, I may say again, who can forbear thinking of HIM in whom it hath pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell, and to whom those who are ready to perish are directed for relief?

This sore famine was not confined to Egypt, but extended to the surrounding countries: and it was wisely ordered that it should be so; since the great end for which God is represented as *calling for it* (Ps. cv. 16) was to bring Jacob's sons, and eventually his whole family, into Egypt; which end would not otherwise have been answered.

Joseph is now filling up his generation work in useful and important labors; and, like a true son of Abraham, he is *blessed and made a blessing*. Yet it was in the midst of this career of activity that his father Jacob said with a deep sigh, "Joseph is not!" What a large portion of our troubles would subside if we knew but the whole truth!

DISCOURSE XLIX.

THE FIRST INTERVIEW BETWEEN JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN.

Gen. xlii.

THINGS now approach fast to a crisis. We hear but little more of the famine, but as it relates to Jacob's family, on whose account it was sent. It is remarkable that all the three patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, experienced a famine while sojourning in the land of promise: a circumstance sufficient to try their faith. Had they been of the disposition of the spies in the times of Moses, they would have concluded it to be a land which ate up the inhabitants, and therefore not worth accepting; but they believed God, and thought well of whatever he did.

Ver. 1, 2. Jacob and his family have well nigh exhausted their provision, and have no prospect of recruiting it. They had money, but corn was not to be had for money in their own country. They could do nothing, therefore, but *look one at another* in sad despair. But Jacob, hearing that there was corn in Egypt rouses them from their torpor. His words resemble those of the four lepers: "Why sit we here until we die?" It is a dictate of nature not to despair while there is a door of hope; and the principle will hold good in things of everlasting moment. Why sit we here, poring over our guilt and misery, when we have heard that with the Lord there is mercy, and with him there is plenteous redemption? How long shall we take counsel in our soul, having sorrow in our hearts daily? Let us trust in his mercy, and our hearts shall rejoice in his salvation.

Ver. 3, 4. The ten brethren immediately betake themselves to their journey, They are called "Joseph's brethren," and not Jacob's sons, because Joseph is at present the principal character in the story. But when Benjamin is called "his brother," there is more meant than in the other case. It would seem to be assigned as the reason why Jacob is unwilling to part with him, that he was the only surviving child of Rachel, and brother of him that was not! As mischief had befallen him, he was afraid the same should befal his brother, and therefore wished the young men to go without him. Jacob does not say, "Lest you should do him mischief, as I fear you did his brother:" but I suspect there was something of this at the bottom, which, when afterwards urged by a kind of necessity to part with Benjamin, came out: "Me ye have bereaved . . . . . Joseph is not!"—Ver. 36. At first he appears to have thought that some evil beast had devoured him; but, upon more mature observation and reflection, he might see reason to suspect, at least, whether it was not by some foul dealing on their part that he had come to his end. As nothing, however, could be proved, he at present kept his suspicions to himself; and the matter passed, as it had done from the first, that mischief in some unknown way had befallen him.

Ver. 5. Nothing is said of their journey, except that a number of their countrymen went with them on the same errand; for the famine was in the land of Canaan. Such a number of applicants might possibly excite fears in their minds lest there should not be enough for them all. Such fears however, if they existed in this case, were unnecessary; and must always be unnecessary, where there is enough and to spare.

Ver. 6. Now Joseph being governor of the land, they find him on their arrival fully employed in serving the Egyptians. He had assistants; but his eye pervaded every thing. As soon as they could get access to the governor, they, according to the eastern custom, bow themselves before him, with their faces to the earth.

Ver. 7. We may wonder that Joseph could live all this time in Egypt, without going to see his father or his brethren. We might indeed allege that while with Potiphar he had probably neither opportunity nor inclination; when in prison he was not allowed to go beyond its walls; and, when advanced under Pharaoh, his hands were so fully employed that he could not be spared. We know that when his father

was to come down to him he could only send for him; and, when he went to bury him, there was great formality required to attend his movements, a number of the Egyptians going with him. But it was doubtless ordered of God that he should not go, but that his brethren should come to him; for on this depended the whole issue of the affair. And now comes on the delicate part of the story: "Joseph saw his brethren, and knew them." What must have been his feelings! The remembrance of the manner in which he parted from them two-and-twenty years ago, the events which had since befallen him, their prostration before him, and the absence of Benjamin, from which he might be apprehensive that they had also made away with him—altogether, must have been a great shock to his sensibility. Let him beware, or his countenance will betray him. He feels the danger of this, and therefore immediately puts on a stern look, speaks roughly to them, and effects to take them for spies. By this innocent piece of artifice, he could interrogate them, and get out of them all the particulars that he wished, without betraying himself, which he could not have done by any other means. The manner in which he asked them, "Whence come ye?" would convey to them an idea of suspicion as to their designs. It was like saying, Who and what are you? I do not like your looks. Their answer is humble and proper, stating the simple truth . . . . they came from Canaan, and had no other design in view than to buy food.

Ver. 8. "Joseph knew his brethren," and felt for them, notwithstanding his apparent severity; "but they knew not him!" It was wisely ordered that it should be so, and is easily accounted for. When they last saw each other, they were grown to man's estate, but he was a lad; they were probably in much the same dress, but he was clothed in vestures of fine linen, with a golden chain about his neck; and they had only one face to judge by, whereas he had ten, the knowledge of any one of which would lead to the knowledge of all. Now Joseph sees, without being seen; and now he remembers his dreams of the sheaves, and of the stars.

Ver. 9—14. Determined to continue at present unknown, and yet wishing to know more of them, and of matters in Canaan, Joseph still speaks under an assumed character, and affects to be dissatisfied with their answer. "Ye are spies," saith he, "to see the nakedness of the land are ye come." They modestly and respectfully disown the charge, and repeat the true and only object of their coming; adding, what is very much in point, "We are all one man's sons." This was saying, Ours is not a political, but a domestic errand: we are not sent hither by a king, but by a father, and merely to supply the wants of the family. Still he affects to disbelieve them; for he does not know enough yet. He therefore repeats his suspicions, in order to provoke them to be more particular: as if he should say, I will know all about you before I sell you corn, or send you away. This had the desired effect. "Thy servants," say they, "are [or were] twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and, behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is not." This is deeply interesting, and exquisitely affecting to Joseph. By this he learns that his father was yet alive, and his brother too. O these are joyful tidings! This was the drift of his questions, as they afterwards tell their father Jacob: "The man asked us straitly of our state, and of our kindred, saying, Is your father yet alive? Have ye another brother? And we told him according to the tenor of these words."—Ch. xliii. 7. But what must have been his sensations at the mention of the last words, "One is not!" . . . . Well, he conceals his feelings, and affects to turn their account of matters against them. They had not told all the truth at first. It seems at first there were only ten of them, and now there were eleven: "That is it that I spake unto you, saying, Ye are spies."

Ver. 15, 16. He now proposes to prove them. "By the life of Pharaoh," saith he, "you shall not go hence, except your youngest brother come hither. Send one of you and fetch him, that your words may be proved, whether there be any truth in you; or else, by the life of Pharaoh, surely ye are spies." Some suppose that Joseph had learned the manner of the Egyptians by living among them, or that he would not thus have sworn by the life of Pharaoh; but I see no ground for any such thing. We might as well say that he had learned to speak untruth, because he really had no such suspicions as he feigned; or, that he had learned magic, seeing he afterwards talked of "divining;" or, that our Saviour had learned the proud and haughty spirit of the Jews, who treated the Gentiles as dogs, because, for the sake of trying the woman of Canaan, he made use of that kind of language. The truth is, Joseph acted under an assumed character. He wished to be taken for an Egyptian nobleman, with whom it was as common to swear by the life of Pharaoh as it was afterwards for a Roman to swear by the fortune of Cæsar.

But wherefore does Joseph thus keep up the deception? and why propose such methods of proving his brethren? I suppose at present his wish is to *detain* them.

Yes, they must not leave Egypt thus: had they done this, he might have seen them no more: yet he had no other cause to assign than this, without betraying the truth, which it was not a fit time to do at present.

Ver. 17, 18. Take these men up, said Joseph to his officers, and put them into a place of safe custody: it is not proper they should be at large. Here they lie three days; a period which afforded him time to think what to do, and them to reflect on what they had done. On the third day he paid them a visit and that in a temper of more apparent mildness. He assures them that he has no designs upon their life, nor any wish to hurt their family; and ventures to give a reason for it which must to them appear no less surprising than satisfying: "I fear God." What, an Egyptian nobleman know and fear the true God? If so, they have no injustice to fear at his hands; nor can he withhold food from a starving family. The fear of God will ever be connected with justice and humanity to man. But how mysterious an affair! If he be a good man, how is it that he should treat us so roughly? How is it that God should suffer him so to mistake our designs? Severity from the hand of goodness is doubly severe. Their hearts must surely by this time have been full. Such were the methods which this wise man made use of to agitate their minds, and to touch every spring of sensibility within them; and such were the means which God by him made use of to bring them to repentance. This indeed is his ordinary method of dealing with sinners: now their fears are awakened by threatnings, or adverse providences, in which death sometimes stare them in the face: and now a little gleam of hope arises, just sufficient to keep the mind from sinking; yet all is covered with doubt and mystery. It is thus, as by alternate frost and rain and sunshine upon the earth, that he humbleth the mind, and maketh soft the heart of man.

Ver. 19—24. Joseph, still under a disguise, though he consents that nine out of the ten should go home with provision for the relief of the family, yet, that he may have some pledge for their return, insists on one being detained as a hostage till they should prove themselves true men, by bringing their younger brother; and his will at present must be their law. Having thus determined their cause, he withdraws from their immediate company to a little distance, where perhaps he might stand conversing with some other persons, but still within hearing of what passed among them. As he had all along spoken to them by an interpreter, they had no suspicion that he understood Hebrew, and therefore began talking to one another in that language with the greatest freedom and, as they thought, without danger of being understood. Their full hearts now began to utter themselves. Perhaps their being obliged to speak of Joseph as "not" might serve to bring him to their remembrance. Whatever it was, the same thoughts had been in all their minds, which probably they could read in each other's looks. As soon, therefore, as one of them broke silence, the rest immediately joined in ascribing all this evil which had befallen them to this cause. "They said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us!" God, in dealing with sinners, usually adapts the punishment to the sin, so as to cause them to read the one in the other. Hence adverse providences call our sin to remembrance; our own wickedness corrects us, and our backslidings reprove us. They would not hear Joseph in his distress, and now they could not be heard; they had thrown him into a pit, and are themselves now thrown into a prison! These convictions are heightened by the reproaches of Reuben, who gives them to expect blood for blood. Reuben was that, methinks, to his brethren which conscience is to a sinner; remonstrating at the outset, and, when judgment overtakes him, reproaching him, and foreboding the worst of consequences. His words are sharp as a two edged sword "Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? Therefore behold, also, his blood is required!" But, that which is still more affecting, Joseph hears all, and understands it, and this without their suspecting it. Such words however were too much for the heart of man, at least such a man as he was, to bear: it is no wonder, therefore that he "turned himself about from them and wept!" But, having recovered himself, he returned to them, and with an austere countenance took Simeon, and bound him before their eyes. This must be cutting work on both sides. On the part of Joseph, it must be a great force put upon his feelings; and, on theirs, it would seem a prelude to greater evils. There might be a fitness in taking Simeon rather than any other. He had proved himself a ferocious character by his conduct towards the Shechemites; and therefore it is not unlikely he was one of the foremost in the cruelty practised towards Joseph. Perhaps he was the man who tore off his coat of many colors, and threw him into the pit. If so, it would tend to humble him, and heighten all their fears, as beholding in it the righteous judgment of God.

Ver. 25—28. This done, their sacks are

ordered to be filled and their money restored; not by giving it into their hands, however, but by putting it into the mouths of their sacks. But why all this mysterous conduct? was it love? It was, at the bottom; but love operating at present in a way tending to perplex, confound and dismay them. It could not appear to them in any other light than as either an oversight, or a design to ensnare and find occasion against them. It was certain to fill their minds with consternation and fear; and such appears to have been the intention of Joseph from the first. It accords with the wisdom of God, when he means to bring a sinner to a right mind, to lead him into dark and intricate situations, of which he shall be utterly unable to perceive the design; to awaken by turns his fears and his hopes; bring his sin to remembrance; and cause him to feel his littleness, his danger, and his utter insufficiency to deliver his soul: and such, in measure, appears to have been the design of Joseph, according to the wisdom that was imparted to him on this singular occasion. If his brethren had known all, they would not have felt as they did: but neither would they have been brought to so right a state of mind, nor have been prepared, as they were, for that which followed. And if we knew all, with respect to the mysterious dispensations of God, we should have less pain; but then we should be less humbled and less fitted to receive the mercy which is prepared for us.

It is remarkable how this circumstance operates on their minds. They construe it to mean something against them; but in what way they know not. They do not reproach the man, the lord of the land, though it is likely from his treatment of them that they would suspect some ill design against them: but, overlooking second causes, they ask, "What is this that God hath done to us?" To his righteous judgment they attributed what they had already met with, ver. 21, 22; and now it seems to them that he is still pursuing them in a mysterious way, and with a design to require their brother's blood at their hand. Such a construction, though painful for the present, was the most useful to them of any that could have been put upon it.

Ver. 29—35. Arriving at their father's house, they tell him of all that had befallen them in Egypt, that they may account for their coming home without Simeon, and their being required when they went again to take Benjamin with them. But the mysterious circumstance of the money being found by the way in their sacks they appear to have concealed. Mention is made of only one of the sacks being opened; yet, by what they afterwards said to the steward, ch. xliii. 21, it appears that they opened them all, and found every man's money in his sack's mouth. But they might think their father would have blamed them for not returning with it when they were only a day's journey from Egypt, and therefore agreed to say nothing to him about it, but leave him to find it out. Hence it is that they are represented, on opening their sacks, as discovering the money in a manner as if they knew nothing of it before; not only participating with their father in his apprehensions, but seeming also to join with him in his surprise.

Ver. 36—38. If the discovery of the money affected Jacob, much more the requirement of his darling son. This touches him to the quick. He cannot help thinking of the end that Joseph had come to. The reasons he had to suspect some foul dealing, in that affair, had probably made him resolve long ago that Benjamin should never be trusted in their hands! Yet things are now so circumstanced that he must go with them. It was a distressing case. Jacob speaks, as well he might, in great anguish; having in a manner lost all his earthly hopes, save one; and of that he is now in danger of being deprived. His words have too much peevish sorrow about them: they certainly reflect upon his sons; and the last sentence would almost seem to contain a reflection upon providence. The words "all these things are against me" must have some reference to the promise, "I will surely do the good;" and, if so, they were like saying, Is this the way? Surely not!—Yet so it was. The conduct of God towards Jacob is covered with as great a mystery as that of Joseph towards his brethren; but all will be right at last. Much present trouble arises from our not knowing the whole truth.

In mentioning the name of Joseph, Jacob had touched a tender place; an old wound, which providence too had been lately probing. On this occasion, all that were guilty, you will perceive, are silent. Reuben is the only one that speaks, and he dares not touch that subject; but with strong and passionate language seems to aim to divert his mind from it, and to fix it upon Benjamin only: "Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee." This language so far answers the end as that no more is said of their having "bereaved" him of Joseph: but he still dwells upon his being "dead," nor can he at present be persuaded to part with his brother. "If mischief," saith he, "befal him in the way in which ye go, then shall ye bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave."

DISCOURSE L.

THE SECOND INTERVIEW BETWEEN JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN.

Gen. xliii.

VER. 1, 2. The relief obtained by the first journey to Egypt is soon exhausted: for "the famine was sore in the land," and therefore nothing of its native productions could be added to the other to make it last the longer. "Go," said Jacob to his sons, "and buy us a little food." Avarice and distrust would have wished for much, and have been for hoarding it in such a time as this: but Jacob is contented with a little, desirous that others should have a part as well as himself; and, with respect to futurity, he puts his trust in God.

Ver. 3—5. But here the former difficulty recurs: they cannot, must not, will not, go without their younger brother. This is trying. Nature struggles with nature; the affection of the father with the calls of hunger: but the former must yield. Jacob does not appear, however, at present, to be entirely willing: wherefore Judah, considering it as a fit opportunity, urges the matter, alleging the peremptory language of the man, the lord of the land, on the subject.

Ver. 6, 7. This brings forth one more feeble objection, or rather complaint, and which must be the last: "Wherefore dealt ye so ill with me as to tell the man whether ye had a brother?" To which they very properly answer that they could not do otherwise, being so strictly examined; nor was it possible for them to know the use that would be made of it.

Ver. 8—10. While matters were thus hanging in suspense, Judah very seasonably and kindly attempts to smooth the difficulty to his father, by offering in the most solemn manner to be surety for the lad, and to bear the blame forever if he did not bring him back and set him before him. In addition to this, he alleges that the life of the whole family depended upon his father's acquiescence, and that they had been too long detained already.

Ver. 11—14. And now Jacob must yield—must yield up his beloved Benjamin, though not without a mixture of painful reluctance: but imperious necessity demands it. He who a few weeks before had said, "My son shall not go down with you," is now upon the whole constrained to part with him. Thus have we often seen the tender relative, who in the first stages of affliction thought it impossible to sustain the loss of a beloved object, gradually reconciled, and at length witnessing the pangs of wasting disease, almost desirous of the removal. Thus it is that the wisdom and goodness of God are seen in our bereavements: the burden which at first threatens to crush us into the grave, being let down gradually upon our shoulders, becomes not only tolerable, but almost desirable.

But mark the manner in which the patriarch acquiesces: his is not the sullen consent of one who yields to fate, but in his heart rebels against God. No, he yields in a manner worthy of a man of God; proposing first that every possible means should be used to conciliate the man, the lord of the land, and then committing the issue of the whole to God. Just thus he had acted when his brother Esau was coming against him with four hundred men.—Chapter xxxii. 6—12. "Take of the best fruits of the land in your vessels, and carry down the man a present; take double money in your hands, and the money that was brought again in the mouth of your sacks; take also your brother; and God almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin. If I be bereaved, I am bereaved!" The fruits of Canaan, especially in a time of famine, would be a great token of respect; the double money might be necessary, as the continuance of the famine might enhance the price of corn; and the restoration of that which was returned would prove their integrity.

But we must not pass over the concluding part without noticing two or three things in particular. 1. The *character* under which the Lord is addressed: "God almighty," or God all sufficient. This was the name under which Abraham was blessed: "I am God almighty;" and which was used by Isaac in his blessing Jacob: "God almighty bless thee, and give thee the blessing of Abraham." It is natural to suppose that Jacob, in putting up this prayer, thought of these covenant promises and blessings, and that it was the prayer of *faith*. 2. The *mistake* on which the prayer is founded, which yet was acceptable to God. He prayed for the turning of the man's heart in a way of mercy; but the man's heart did not need turning. Yet Jacob thought it did, and had no means of knowing otherwise. The truth of things may in some cases be concealed from us, to render us more importunate; and this importunity, though it may appear at last to have been unnecessary, yet being right according as circumstances appeared at the time, God will approve of it, and we shall find our account in it. 3. The *resignation* with which he concludes: "If I be bereaved, I am bereaved!" It is God's usual way, in trying those whom he loves, to touch them in the tenderest part.

Herein the trial consists. If there be one object round which the heart has entwined more than all others, that is it which is likely to be God's rival, and of that we must be deprived. Yet if, when it goes, we humbly resign it up into God's hands, it is not unusual for him to restore it to us, and that with more than double interest. Thus Abraham, on giving up Isaac, received him again: and David, on giving up himself to God to do with him as seemed good in his sight, was preserved in the midst of peril.

Ver. 15, 16. Jacob's sons now betake themselves to their second journey, and do as their father had directed them. On arriving in Egypt, they are introduced to Joseph. Joseph, looking upon them beholds his brother Benjamin. It is likely that his eyes would here be in some danger of betraying his heart; and that, being conscious of this, he instantly gives orders to his steward to take these men home to his house, and prepare a dinner, for that they must dine with him at noon. By this means he would be able to compose himself, and to form a plan how to conduct and in what manner to discover himself to them, which it appears by the sequel it was his design at this time to have accomplished. See how fruitful love is of kind contrivance, seeking and finding opportunities to gratify itself by closer and closer interviews. Thus when two of John's disciples were kindly asked "what seek ye?" they answer "Master, where *dwellest thou?*" As who should say, We want to be better acquainted with thee, and to say more than could be said in this public place. And thus when Jesus himself would commune with his disciples, he saith unto them, "Children come and dine!"

Ver. 17, 18. But to Joseph's brethren things still wear a mysterious and confounding aspect: that which he meant in love, they construed as a design to ensnare and enslave them. The mind, while in a state of dark suspense, is apt to view every thing through a discouraging medium. It will misconstrue even goodness itself, and find fear where no fear is. Thus it is that souls depressed under God's hand often misinterpret his providences, and draw dismal conclusions from the same things which in another state of mind would afford them relief. When the soul is in such a frame as to "refuse to be comforted," it will "remember *God*, and be troubled."—Psa. lxxvii. 2, 3.

Ver. 19—23. Being introduced into the house of Joseph, however, though it excited their fears, yet it afforded an opportunity during his absence of speaking to the steward concerning the money found in their sacks, which was the circumstance that at present most alarmed them. It was wise in them to be first in mentioning this matter, that, if any thing were afterwards said by Joseph about it, they might appeal to the steward, and he could declare on their behalf that, without any accusation they had of their own accord mentioned the whole business to him, and returned the money. But the answer of the steward is surprising. He could scarcely have spoken more suitably, if he had been in the secret. I do not suppose he knew that these were Joseph's brethren; but he would know that they were his countrymen; and perceiving the interest which he took in them, and the air of mystery which attended his conduct towards them, he would be at no loss to conclude that there was no ill design against them. It is likely he knew of the money being returned by Joseph's order; and he knew his master too well to suppose that, whatever might be his design in it, he would hurt the poor men for what had been done by his own order. Moreover, this steward, whoever he was, appears to have learnt something by being with Joseph concerning the true God, the God of the Hebrews. His answer is kind, and wise, and religious. "Peace be unto you, fear not; your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks: I had your money." q. d. Let your hearts be at rest: I will be answerable that you paid what was due: inquire no farther about it: providence brought it, and let that satisfy you. To render them still more at ease, Simeon is brought out of his confinement and introduced to them; which, being done by the order of Joseph, was a proof of his being satisfied. The deliverance of the hostage was an evidence that all was well. Thus the "bringing again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep," was to us a token for good, and therefore is ascribed to God, as *the God of peace*.—Heb. xiii. 20.

Ver. 24, 25. While Joseph is busy about his concerns, and thinking how he shall conduct himself towards his brethren, they are busy in washing and dressing themselves to appear before him, and in preparing the present which they had brought for him. What was done required to be done in a handsome manner, and they are disposed to do their best.

Ver. 26, 27. And now, the business of the morning being over Joseph enters. They immediately request his acceptance of the spices and sweetmeats of Palestine, sent as a present by their father, bowing down their faces to the earth, as they had done before. Thus Joseph's dream, which was repeated to him, is repeated in its fulfilment. There is nothing said of his manner of receiving it; but doubtless it was kind and affable. And, as they would pre-

sent it in the name of their father, this would furnish a fair opportunity to inquire particularly respecting him; a subject on which his feelings would be all alive. It is charming to see how he supports the character which he had assumed, that of an Egyptian nobleman, who remembered what they had said about a venerable old man, of whose welfare he very politely inquires. "Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spake? Is he yet alive?"

Ver. 28. They answer very properly, and call their father *his servant*, and again make obeisance. Thus, in them, Jacob himself bowed down to Joseph; and thereby that part of his dream was also fulfilled.

Ver. 29. When Joseph first saw his brethren, his eyes, perhaps without his being aware of it, were fixed on Benjamin. Ver. 16. But, having detected himself in that instance, he appears to be more upon his guard in this. He receives the present, and converses with them about their father's welfare, without once turning his eyes towards his brother. But having done this, he thinks he may venture a look at him. He "lifted up his eyes, and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said" to the others, but still under the same disguise, "Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me?" If he could have waited for an answer, they would doubtless have told him it was; but his heart is too full. No sooner is the question out of his lips than (it may be with his hand upon his head) he adds, "God be gracious unto thee, my son!" Oh Joseph, on what tender ground dost thou presume to walk! This benediction though under the disguise of a good wish from a stranger, was in reality an effusion of a full heart, which in this manner sought for ease. Genuine love longs to express itself.

Ver. 30. This little indulgence of affection, however, had well nigh betrayed him. Ardent desires will always plead hard to go a little way, and presume not to go too far; but to indulge them a little is like letting air into a room on fire. Joseph is so affected by what has passed that he is obliged to quit the company and retire into his chamber to weep there.

Ver. 31. Having recovered himself, and washed his face that they might not discover his tears, he re-enters, and behaves with much hospitality and attention.

Ver. 32—34. And now I apprehend it was Joseph's wish to discover himself to his brethren, or rather to enable them to discover him. There are three things in particular, while they were at dinner, each tending to this end, and, as I conceive designed for it. 1. The order of the tables. One for himself, one for the strangers, and one for the Egyptians. The design of this was to set them a thinking of him, and who he was, or could be. That the Egyptians and Hebrews should eat apart they could easily account for: but who or what is this man? Is he not an Egyptian? Yet, if he be, why eat by himself? Surely he must be a foreigner. 2. The order in which they themselves were seated; it was "before him," so that they had full opportunity of looking at him; and, what was astonishing to them, every man was placed "according to his age." But who can this be, that is acquainted with their ages so as to be able to adjust things in this order? Surely it must be some one who knows us, though we know not him. Or is he a diviner? Who or what can he be? They are said to have "marvelled one at another," and well they might. It is marvellous that they did not hence suspect who he was. 3. The peculiar favor which he expressed to Benjamin, in sending him a mess five times more than the rest. There is no reason to suppose that Benjamin ate more than the rest: but this was the manner of showing special favor in those times.—See chap. xlv. 22, 23. It was therefore saying, in effect, I not only know all your ages, but towards that young man I have more than a common regard . . . . Look at all this, and look at me . . . Look at me, my brother Benjamin. Dost thou not know me?—But all was hid from them. Their eyes, like those of the disciples towards their Lord, seem to have been holden, that they should not know him. Their minds, however, are eased from all apprehensions, and they drank and were cheerful in his company.

DISCOURSE LI.

THE CUP IN BENJAMIN'S SACK.

Gen. xliv. 1—17.

Ver. 1, 2. As every measure which Joseph had yet taken to lead his brethren to discover who he was had failed, he must now have recourse to another expedient to detain them. Their sacks are ordered to be filled, and their beasts laden with as much corn as they can carry, their money restored as before, and a silver cup put into the sack's mouth of the youngest. All this is love: but it is love still working in a mysterious way. The object seems to be to *detain* Benjamin, and to *try* the rest.

Ver. 3—6. Having stopped over the night, next morning at break of day they are dismissed, and set off for home. After the treatment which they had received, we may suppose they were now all very

happy. Simeon is restored, Benjamin is safe, and they are well laden with provisions for the family. They would now be ready to anticipate the pleasure of seeing their father and easing his anxious heart. But lo! another dark cloud presently overspreads their sky. They had scarcely got out of the city before the steward overtakes them, and charges them with the heinous crime of having stolen his lord's cup; a crime which would have been highly offensive at any time, but much more so after the generous treatment which they had received. And, to perplex them the more, he intimates as if his lord were a diviner, and must needs be able to find out stolen property! Such we see was heathenism in those early ages; and such heathenism is found even in christian countries to this day.

Ver. 7—9. At this they are all thunderstruck with surprise; yet, conscious of their innocence, they disown the charge, and express the utmost abhorrence at such a conduct. They appeal also to a fact with which the steward was well acquainted; namely, their having brought again the money which they had found in their sacks. Did this conduct comport with the character of thieves? Can it be supposed after this, say they, that we should steal out of my lord's house either silver or gold? Search us throughout. On whomsoever it be found, let him die, and we will all consent to become slaves!—Such was their confidence that the charge was unfounded; and their invoking so severe a penalty would be a presumptive evidence that it was so.

Ver. 10, 11. The steward, who is well aware of some profound design on the part of his master, though he knew not the whole of it, humors the thing with much address. He accedes to the mode of trial, but softens the penalty, proposing that none but the guilty should suffer, and he nothing more than the loss of liberty. With this they readily acquiesce; and being stung with reproach, they, with indignant sensations, hastily unlade every man his beast in order to disprove the charge. How willing is conscious innocence that things should be searched to the bottom; and how confident of an honorable acquittal!

Ver. 12. And now search is made from the eldest to the youngest. Ten out of eleven are clear, and enjoy the triumph of a good conscience; but, lo, in the sack of the youngest the cup is found! Every thing seems contrived to give an edge to their sorrow. It was when they were leaving Egypt in high spirits, that they were stopped; and now when they have disproved the charge, except in one instance, lo, that instance fails them! To have their hopes raised within one step of an acquittal, and then to be at once disappointed, was very affecting. "Thou hast lifted me up and cast me down."

But what a confounding event! Could they really think for a moment that Benjamin had been guilty of the mean and wicked action which seems to be proved upon him? I do not suppose they could. They must remember having found the money in their sacks' mouths, when nevertheless they knew themselves to be innocent. Nay, and in searching for the cup, though nothing is now said of the money, yet they must have found it there a second time. All this would acquit Benjamin in their account. Yet what can they alledge in his favor, without reflecting upon his accusers? The article is found upon him; which is a species of proof that seems to admit of no answer. A deep and dismal silence therefore pervades the company. In very agony they rend their clothes, reload their beasts, and return into the city. As they walk along, their thoughts turn upon another event—an event which had more than once occurred to their remembrance already. It is the Lord! We are murderers; and, though we have escaped human detection, yet divine vengeance will not suffer us to live. There, though guilty, we were acquitted: here, though innocent, we shall be condemned!

Ver. 13—17. Arriving at Joseph's house, where he still was, no doubt expecting their return, Judah and his brethren fall prostrate before him. Judah is particularly mentioned, as having a special interest at stake on account of his surety-ship: but neither he nor his brethren can utter a word, but wait in this humble posture to hear what is said to them.

Joseph, having carried matters to this height, once more assumes the tone of a great man, highly offended, suggesting, withal, that they ought to have known that such a man as he could certainly divine, and that therefore it would be in vain to think of escaping with his property undetected.

As Judah appeared foremost on their entrance, Joseph's words would probably be directed to him for an answer. But what answer can be given? The surety and the advocate is here dumb; for he had been a party in guilt; not indeed in the present instance, but in another. He can therefore only exclaim, "What shall we say unto my lord? What shall we speak, or how shall we clear ourselves? *God hath found out the iniquity of his servants!* Behold, we are my lord's servants; both we, and he also with whom the cup is found!" He did not mean by this to plead guilty to the charge; but neither dare he

plead innocent, for that would have been accusing the offended party of having ensnared them, and so have made the case still worse; neither was he able to confront the evidence which appeared against his younger brother. What can he say or do? He can only suggest that it is a mysterious providence, in which it appears to be the design of God to punish them for their FORMER CRIMES. This answer, which was manifestly dictated by what lay uppermost in all their minds, was at the same time the most delicate and modest manner in which he could possibly have insinuated a denial of the charge. While it implied their innocence in the present instance, it contained no reflection upon others, but an acknowledgment of the divine justice, and a willingness to bear the punishment that might be inflicted upon them, as coming from above. If Joseph had really been the character which he appeared to be, such an answer must have gone far towards disarming him of resentment. How forcible are right words! The simple and genuine utterance of the heart is the most irresistable of all eloquence.

Joseph, in answer, disclaims every thing that might wear the appearance of cruelty. No, he will not make bondmen of them, but merely of him on whom the cup was found. Such is the sentence. They may go about their business; but Benjamin must be detained in slavery. Alas! and is this sentence irrevocable? Better all be detained than he; for it will be the death of his father! What can be said, or done? The surety now becomes the advocate, and that to purpose. Such an intercession as that which follows we shall no where find, unless it be in His whom the Father "heareth always." But I shall here close the present discourse, with only a reflection or two on the subject.

1. We see a striking analogy between the conduct of Joseph towards his brother Benjamin and that of Jesus towards his people. "Whom I love, I rebuke and chasten." Benjamin must have thought himself peculiarly unhappy to be one day marked out as a favorite, and the next convicted as a criminal; and yet in neither instance able to account for it. It might teach him, however, when the mystery came to be unraveled, not to draw hasty conclusions from uncertain premises; but to wait and see the issue of things, before he decided upon them. Such a lesson it will be well for us to learn from it. The Lord often brings us into difficulties, that he may detain us, as I may say, from leaving him. Were it not for these, he would have fewer importunate applications at a throne of grace than he has. He does not "afflict willingly," or *from his heart:* but from necessity, and that he may bring us nearer to him.

2. We see also a striking analogy between Joseph's conduct towards his brethren and that of the Lord towards us. In all he did, I suppose, it was his design to try them. His putting the cup into Benjamin's sack, and convicting him of the supposed guilt, would try their love to him, and to their aged father. Had they been of the same disposition as when they sold Joseph, they would not have cared for him. Their language would have been somewhat to this effect:—Let this young favorite go, and be a slave in Egypt. If he have stolen the cup, let him suffer for it. We have a good riddance of him; and without being under the necessity of dealing with him as we did with his brother. And, as to the old man, if he will indulge in such partial fondness, let him take the consequence.—But, happily, they are now of another mind. God appears to have made use of this mysterious providence, and of Joseph's behaviour, among other things, to bring them to repentance. And the cup being found in Benjamin's sack would give them occasion to manifest it. It must have afforded the most heart-felt satisfaction to Joseph, amidst all the pain which it cost him, to witness their tender concern for Benjamin, and for the life of their aged father. This of itself was sufficient to excite, on his part, the fullest forgiveness. Thus God is represented as "looking upon a contrite spirit," and even overlooking heaven and earth for it.—Isa. lxvi. 1, 2. Next to the gift of his Son, he accounts it the greatest blessing he can bestow upon a sinful creature. Now, that on which he sets so high a value he may be expected to produce, even though it may be at the expense of our present peace. Nor have we any cause of complaint, but the contrary. What were the suspense, the anxiety, and the distress of Joseph's brethren, in comparison of that which followed? And what is the suspense, the anxiety, and the distress of an awakened sinner, or a tried believer, in comparison of the joy of faith, or the grace that shall be revealed at the appearing of Jesus Christ? It will then be found that our light affliction, which was but for a moment, has been working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

DISCOURSE LII.

JUDAH'S INTERCESSION.

Gen. xliv. 18—34.

JOSEPH, in the character of a judge, has sternly decided the cause, that Benjamin, the supposed offender, should be detained a bondman, and the rest may go in peace. But Judah, the surety, wounded to the heart with this decision, presumes as an advocate to plead, not that the sentence may be annulled, but that it may be changed with respect to its object. It was a difficult and delicate undertaking; for, when a judge has once decided a cause, his honor is pledged to abide by it. He must, therefore, have felt the danger of incurring his displeasure by attempting to induce him in that stage of the business to alter his purpose. But love to his father, and to his brother, with a recollection of his own engagement, impose upon him the most imperious necessity.

Ver. 18. Prompted by these sentiments, he approaches the judge. His first attempt is to conciliate him: "Oh! my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant; for thou art even as Pharaoh." This brief introduction was admirably calculated to soften resentment, and obtained a patient hearing. The respectful title given him, *My lord*—the entreaty for permission to *speak*—the intimation that it should be but as it were *a word;* the deprecation of his anger, as being in a manner equal to that of *Pharaoh;* and all this prefaced with an interjection of sorrow, as though nothing but the deepest distress should have induced him to presume to speak on such a subject, showed him to be well qualified for his undertaking.

Ver. 19. And now, perceiving in his Judge a willingness to hear, he proceeds, not by passionate declamations and appeals to his generosity, but by narrating a simple tale, and then grounding a plea upon it. Truth is the best weapon wherewith to assail the heart: only let truth be represented in an affecting light. His object, remember, is to persuade the judge so far to reverse the doom as to accept of him, the surety, for a bondman, instead of the supposed offender. Mark how every thing he says leads to this issue. "My lord asked his servants, saying, Have ye a father, or a brother?" Here the judge is gently reminded that the occasion of this unhappy young man coming at all into Egypt was what *he himself had said.* He does not mean to reflect upon him for it; but he might hope that merely this circumstance would have some weight in softening his resentment against him. It is observable, however, that in repeating the questions of Joseph, or their own former answers to him, he does not confine himself to terms. Joseph did not say, in so many words, Have ye a father, &c. . . . . nor did they make answer in the exact form as is here repeated; but he pretends only to repeat the tenor of what passed, of the justness of which the judge himself would be well acquainted. Nor is this verbal deviation to be attributed merely to the failure of memory; for he avails himself of it to introduce every affecting circumstance that could possibly touch the heart, which if he had adhered to a mere verbal rehersal would have been lost. Of this the following words are a remarkable instance.

Ver. 20. "And we said unto my lord, We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one; and his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother, and his father loveth him." All these things were said, I believe, either expressly or by implication, but *not in this order.* As they were said before, they were merely rays of light diffused in the air; but here they are reduced to a focus, which burns every thing before it. I need not repeat how every word in this inimitable passage tells; how it touches every principle of compassion in the human mind; in short, how it rises, like a swelling wave, till it overcomes resistance, and in a manner compels the judge to say, in his own mind, "Well, whatever this young man has done, he must not be detained!"

Ver. 21—29. Having already intimated that the coming of the lad was *occasioned* by the inquiries concerning the family, and made a proper use of that, the advocate proceeds another step, and reminds his judge that it was in *obedience to his command*: Thou saidst, bring him down unto me, that I may set mine eyes upon him." This circumstance, though it conveyed no reflection, any more than the former, yet would work upon a generous mind, not to distress an aged father by taking advantage of an affair which had occurred merely from a willingness to oblige him. To this he adds, that they discovered at the time a *reluctance*, on their father's account, to comply with this part of his request; but he would have no denial, protesting that, except their younger brother came with them, they should see his face no more. Nor was this all: not only did they feel reluctant on their father's account, but he, when told of it on their return, felt a still *greater reluctance.* The manner in which he introduces his father's objection, repeating it in his own words or rather in his own words at different times reduced as to a focus, is amazing. We repeated, q. d., the

words of my lord to our father; and when, feeling the imperious calls of nature, he requested us to go again and buy a little food, we answered him that we could not go without our younger brother, for we could gain no admittance except he were with us. On this painful occasion thy servant, our father, addressed us as follows:—"Ye know that my wife bare me two sons. And the one went out from,me and I said, surely he is torn in pieces: and I saw him not since. And if ye take this also from me, and mischief befall him ye shall bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave!"

To point out the force of this overwhelming argument requires a view of the human mind, when, like a complicate machine in motion, the various powers and passions of it are at work.

The whole calamity of the family arising from obedience to the judge's own command; an obedience yielded to on their part with great reluctance, because of the situation of their aged father; and on his part with still greater, because his brother was as he supposed torn in pieces, and he the only surviving child of a beloved wife; and the declaration of a venerable, grey-headed man, that if he lose him it will be his death .... was enough to melt the heart of any one possessed of human feelings. If Joseph had really been what he appeared, an Egyptian nobleman, he must have yielded the point. To have withstood it, would have proved him not a man, much less a man who "feared God," as he had professed to be. But, if such would have been his feellings even on that supposition, what must they have been to know what he knew? What impression must it have made upon his mind to be told of Jacob's words: "My wife bare me two sons; and the one went out from me, and I said, Surely he is torn in pieces!"

It is also observable with what singular adroitness Judah avoids making mention of this elder brother of the lad, in any other than his father's words. *He* did not say he was torn in pieces. No; he knew it was not so! But his father had once used that language; and, though he had lately spoken in a manner which bore hard on him and his brethren, yet this is passed over, and nothing hinted but what will turn to account.

Ver. 30, 31. The inference of what effect the detention of Benjamin would have on the aged parent might have been left for the judge to make; but it is a part of the subject which will bear a little enlargement, and that to a very good purpose. Thus therefore he proceeds: "When I come to thy servant my father, and the lad be not with us (seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life), it shall come to pass, when he seeth that the lad is not with us, he will die; and thy servants shall bring down the grey hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave!" The whole of this intercession taken together is not the twentieth part the length of what our best advocates would have made of it in a court of justice: yet the speaker finds room to expatiate upon those parts which are the most tender, and on which a minute description will heighten the general effect. We are surprised, delighted, and melted with his charming parenthesis: "*seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life.*" It is true it does not seem to inform us of any thing which we might not have known without it; but it represents what was before stated in a more affecting light. It is also remarkable how he *repeats* things which are the most tender; as "When I come, *and the lad be not with us.*" "It shall come to pass, when he seeth that *the lad is not with us.*" So also in describing the effect this would produce: "When he seeth that the lad is not with us, *he will die*; and we shall bring down the grey hairs of thy servant our father *with sorrow to the grave.*" This last sentence, also, not only repeats the death of the aged parent in a more affecting manner than the first, but contains a plea for Benjamin's release founded on the cruel situation of their being otherwise forced in a manner to become parricides!

Ver. 32—34. One plea more remains, which will at once contain an apology for his importunity, and make way for what, with humble submission, he means to propose. This is, "Thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father." And, that it may make the deeper impression, he repeats the terms of it: "If I bring him ,not unto thee, let me bear the blame forever." And now, having stated his peculiar situation, he presumes to express his *petition.* But why did he not mention that at first, and allege what he has alleged in support of it? Such might have been the process of a less skillful advocate; but Jndah's feelings taught him better. His withholding that to the last was holding the mind of his judge in a state of affecting suspense, and preventing the objections which an abrupt introduction of it at the beginning might have created. He might in that case have cut him short, as he had done before, saying "God forbid that I should do so: the man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my servant." But he could not refuse to hear his tale; and by that he was prepared to hear his petition. Thus Esther, when presenting her petition to Ahasuerus, kept it back till she had, by holding him in suspense, raised his desire to the

utmost height to know what it was, and induced in him a predisposition to grant it.

But what is Judah's petition? That the crime may be passed over, and that they may all return home to their father? No: Let thy servant, I pray thee, abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord, and let the lad go up with his brethren!" If we except the grace of another and greater substitute, never surely was there a more generous proposal! And when to this is added the filial regard from which it proceeds, "for how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me; lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come on my father!" this in itself, distinct from all which had gone before it, was enough to overcome every objection.

DISCOURSE LIII.

JOSEPH MAKES HIMSELF KNOWN TO HIS BRETHREN.

Gen. xlv.

Ver. 1—3. The close of Judah's speech must have been succeeded by a solemn pause. Every heart is full; but every tongue is silent. The audience, if they understood the language, would be all in tears. The ten brethren, viewing the whole as the righteous judgment of God upon them, would be full of fearful amazement as to the issue. Benjamin would feel both for his dear father and his beloved brother who had offered to give himself for him! But what saith the judge? How does he stand affected? I have no doubt but that he must have covered his face during the greater part of the time in which Judah had been pleading: and now this will not suffice. The fire burns within him, and it must have vent. "Cause every man," said he, "to depart from me!" And then he breaks out into a loud weeping, so that the Egyptians from without heard him. Their minds no doubt must be filled with amazement, and desire to know the cause of this strange affair; while the parties within would be still more confounded, to witness such a burst of sorrow, from him who, but awhile before, was all sternness and severity. But now the mystery is at once revealed, and that in a few words—I AM JOSEPH!!! DOTH MY FATHER YET LIVE? If they had been struck by an electrical shock or the most tremendous peal of thunder had instantly been heard over their heads, its effect had been nothing in comparison of that which these words must have produced. They are all struck dumb, and as it were petrified with terror. If he had been actually dead, and had risen and appeared to them, they could not have felt greatly different. The flood of thoughts which would at once rush in upon their minds is past description. No words could better express the general effect than those which are used: "They could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence!"

Ver. 4—8. A little mind, amidst all its sympathy, might have enjoyed the triumph which Joseph now had over them who once hated him, and have been willing to make them feel it: but he has made them feel sufficiently already; and, having forgiven them in his heart, he remembers their sin no more, but is full of tender solicitude to heal their wounded spirits. "Come near unto me," saith he, "I pray you; and they came near; and he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt." This painful event he does not seem to have mentioned but for the sake of convincing them that it was he himself, even their *brother* Joseph, and not another; and lest the mention of it should be taken as a reflection, and so add to their distress, he immediately follows it up with a dissuasive from overmuch sorrow: "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years in the which there shall be neither earing nor harvest. And God sent me before you, to preserve a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh." &c.

In this soothing and tender strain did this excellent man pour balm into their wounded hearts. A less delicate mind would have talked of forgiving them; but he entreats them to forgive themselves, as though the other was out of the question. Nor did he mean that they should abuse the doctrine of providence to the making light of sin; but merely that they should eye the hand of God in all, so as to be reconciled to the event, though they might weep in secret for the part which they had acted. And it is his desire that they should for the present, at least, view the subject much in that point of light, which would arm them against despondency and a being swallowed up of overmuch sorrow. Their viewing things in this light would not abate their godly sorrow, but rather increase it: it would tend only to expel the sorrow of the world, which worketh death. The analogy between all this, and the case of a sinner on Christ's first manifesting himself to his soul, is very striking. I can-

not enlarge on particulars: suffice it to say, the more he views the doctrine of the cross, in which God hath glorified himself, and saved a lost world by those very means which were intended for evil by his murderers, the better it will be with him. He shall not be able to think sin on this account a less, but a greater, evil; and yet he shall be so armed against despondency as even to *rejoice* on what God hath wrought, while he *trembles* in thinking of the evils from which he has escaped.

Ver. 9—11. It is not in the power of Joseph's brethren to talk at present: he therefore talks to them. And to divert their minds from terror, and gradually remove the effects of the shock, he goes on to tell them they must make haste home to his father, and say thus and thus to him in his name; and invite him and all his family to come down forthwith into Egypt, where he and they shall be well provided for during the five years' famine yet to come, and where he shall be near unto him.

Ver. 12—15. While he is thus talking with his brethren, they would be apt to suspect whether all could be true, and whether they were not in a dream, or imposed upon in some supernatural way. To obviate these misgivings of mind, he adds, "and behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth which speaketh unto you, and you shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt," The former part of this speech must needs have produced in him a fresh flood of tears. As to them, I know not whether they could weep at present. Nothing is said of the kind; and it is natural to suppose that they had too much fear as yet mingled with their sorrow to admit of its being vented in this manner. He however, having made mention of *Benjamin*, cannot forbear falling upon his neck and weeping over him: and Benjamin, not feeling that petrifying guilty shock which must have confounded them, fell upon his neck, and wept with him.

Joseph had said nothing to his brethren of forgiving them; but he would now express as much, and more, by his actions; giving an affectionate *kiss* to every one of them, accompanied with tears of tenderness. This appears more than any thing to have removed their terror, so that now they are sufficiently composed to *talk with him*, if not to mingle their tears with his.

Ver. 16—24. The secret, being once disclosed within doors, soon got out; and news of *Joseph's brethren being come* flies through the city, and reaches the palace Pharaoh and his court too are well pleased with it; or, if there were any, who might envy Joseph's high honor, they would not dare to express it.

In other cases, Pharaoh had left every thing to Joseph; and Joseph knowing what he had done, and the confidence which he possessed, had given orders in this case; yet, to save his feelings in having to invite his own relations as it were to another man's house, as well as to express the gratitude of the nation to so great a benefactor, the king in this instance comes forward, and gives orders himself. His orders too were more liberal than those of Joseph: he had desired them to bring with them all the property they had; but Pharaoh bids them to disregard their stuff, for that the good of all the land of Egypt was theirs. Joseph had said nothing about the mode of conveyance; but Pharaoh gives orders for waggons, or chariots, as the word is sometimes rendered, to be sent to fetch them.

Joseph, however, in executing these orders, gives fresh testimonies of affection, not only in furnishing them with "provisions by the way," but to each man changes of raiment, and to Benjamin his brother three hundred pieces of silver, and five changes of raiment. And to his honored father, though he could not on account of business go and fetch him, yet he sends the richest present; namely, ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt, and ten she asses laden with corn and bread and meat for him by the way. These things might not be all necessary: Jacob would need no more for himself than any other individual of the family; but, as we saw in the mess which was sent to Benjamin, this was the mode at that time of expressing peculiar affection. To all this kindness he added a word of counsel: "See that ye fall not out by the way." Joseph had already heard from Reuben some severe reflections on his brethren (ch. xlii. 22); and might suppose that such things would be repeated when they were alone. One might be accused of this, and another of that, till all their minds would be grieved and wounded. But he that could find in his heart to love them, after all their unworthy conduct, gives them, as I may say, "a new commandment, that they should love one another!"

Ver. 25—28. And now the young people betake themselves to their journey, and in a little time arrive at their father's house. Jacob had doubtless been looking and longing for their return, and that with many fears and misgivings of mind. If the matter was announced as suddenly as it is here related, it is not surprising that "Jacob's heart fainted, and that he believed them not." It must appear too much to be true. The suddenness of the

transition would produce an effect like that of fire and water coming in contact: and though he had suspected that Joseph had not been fairly treated by his brethren, yet he never seems to have doubted that he was dead. It would appear therefore, at first, as if they meant to tantalize him. Perhaps, too, we may partly account for this incredulity from the aptness there is in a dejected mind to believe what is against him rather than what is for him. When they brought the bloody garment he readily believed, saying, "Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces!" But, when good news is told him, it seems too good to be true.

They went on, however, and told him of all the words of Joseph; that is, of the invitations which he sent by them; and, as a proof, pointed to the waggons which were come to take him down. The sight of these overcomes the incredulity of the patriarch, and revives his spirit. "It is enough," said he: "Joseph my son is yet alive. I will go and see him before I die!" Yes, this was enough, not only to remove his doubts, but to heal his wounded heart, to set all right, to solve all mysteries, and to satisfy his soul. He had no more wishes on this side the grave. No mention is made of how he received the gifts, or what he said of his son's glory: it was enough for him that he was alive. The less must give way to the greater. He seems to have considered death as near at hand, and as though he had nothing to do but to go and see him, and, like old Simeon by the Saviour, depart in peace.—Ch. xlvi. 30. But he must live a few years longer, and reflect upon the wisdom and goodness of God in all these mysterious events.

DISCOURSE LIV.

JACOB'S GOING DOWN INTO EGYPT.

Gen. xlvi.

THE patriarch having resolved to go and see his beloved Joseph, soon gets ready for his journey, and takes with him "all that he had." It was generous in Pharaoh to propose his leaving the stuff behind him, but Jacob was not elated with the riches of Egypt, and might wish to put his friends to as little expense as possible. Those things which Pharaoh would call *stuff* might also have a peculiar value in his esteem, as having been given him in answer to prayer.—Chap. xxviii. 20. What is given by our best friend should not be set at nought.

But does not Jacob acknowledge God in this undertaking. It is a very important one to him and to his posterity. Surely he does not "use lightness" in such an affair; and "the thing which he purposeth is not according to the flesh." No, he will solemnly invoke the divine blessing, but not till he has gone one day's journey. He had doubtless committed his way to God, and we hope was satisfied as to the path of duty; but he might have a special reason for deferring his *public* devotions till he should arrive at Beersheba. This was a distinguished spot; what had there taken place would tend to assist him in his approaches to God. It was there that Abraham, after many changes and trials, "called on the name of the everlasting God;" and there that Isaac had the promise renewed to him, "built an altar, and called also upon the name of Jehovah." This therefore shall be the place where Jacob will offer a solemn sacrifice, and invoke the divine blessing on himself and his children.

Arriving at the appointed place towards evening, he and all his company stop; and having reared an altar, or repaired that which had been built aforetime, "offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac." Jacob in his approaches to God, did not forget to avail himself of the covenant made with his forefathers, and of the promises already on record. His coming to this place seems to have been with the very design that his eyes, in beholding the surrounding objects, might assist his mind and affect his heart in the recollection. Nor must we in ours forget to avail ourselves of the covenant of God in Christ, in which is all our salvation. The remembrance of the godliness of our predecessors also, in like circumstances with ourselves, may have a happy influence on our devotions. It is sweet to a holy mind to be able to say, "He is my God, and I will exalt him: my father's God, and I will build him a habitation!

Ver. 2—4. Jacob, having closed the day by a solemn act of worship retires to rest; and, as in a former instance, God appeared and spake to him in visions of the night; calling him twice by name, "Jacob, Jacob!" To which the patriarch answers, "Here am I," ready to hear what God the Lord will speak unto his servant. And he said, "I am God." To one so well acquainted with the divine character as Jacob was, this would be cheering; especially as it would indicate his acceptance of the sacrifice, and his being with him in the way he went. It would seem enough for a godly mind to know that God is with him. But, in compassion to Jacob, it is added, "the God of thy father." As such

he had sought him, and as such he found him. This language amounted to a renewal of the covenant of Abraham, that "God would bless, and make him a blessing; and that in him, and his seed, all the nations of the earth should be blessed." And, lest this should be thought too general it is added, "Fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation. I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again, and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes." Though Jacob's affection to Joseph made him resolve at first to go and see him, yet it is likely he had afterwards some misgivings of mind upon the subject. Abraham went once into Egypt; but he left it under a cloud, and never went again. Isaac, in a time of famine, was forbidden to go.—Chap. xxvi. 2. And, though Jacob had sent his sons to buy corn, yet it did not seem to be the place for him. But God removes his fears, and intimates that Egypt is designed to be the cradle of that great nation which should descend from his loins. They were idolaters, and should prove in the end oppressors: but the promise of God to *go with him* was enough. Neither temptation nor persecution need dismay us, when we are led into it by the Lord: if he lead us into it, we may hope that he will keep us in it. The Lord, in promising Jacob that he would *surely bring him up again*, did not mean that he himself should come back again alive; but that his posterity should, after becoming a great nation. With respect to himself, he was given to expect that his beloved Joseph should survive him, and be present at his death to *close his eyes*. But his descendants should be brought back with a high hand: and, as what was spoken of bringing him up again respected them, so that of going down with him extended to them also.

Ver. 5—7. After so signal an instance of mercy, Jacob can leave Beersheba with a cheerful heart. He is now so far advanced in life, however, as to be glad of a carriage to convey him, and of all the kind and dutiful assistance of his sons to accommodate him. Time was when he wanted no accomodation of this sort; but set off on a much longer journey with only a *staff;* but sixty years' toil and trouble, added to the seventy which had gone before, have reduced him to a state of feebleness and debility. Nature is ordained to decay: but, if grace do but thrive, it need not be regretted. It is wisely and mercifully ordered that the strong should bear the infirmities of the weak, and that those who in infancy and childhood have been borne by their parents should return the kindness due to them under the imbecility of age.

In taking all his substance, as well as all his kindred, he would cut off occasion from those who might be disposed, at least in after times, to reproach the family with having come into Egypt empty-handed, and thrown themselves upon the bounty of the country.

Ver. 8—27. The names of Jacob's descendants who came with him into Egypt are here particularly recorded. Compared with the families of Abraham and Isaac, they appear to be numerous, and afford a prospect of a great nation: yet, compared with those of Ishmael and Esau, they are but few. Three-and-twenty years ago there was "a company of Ishmaelites," who bought Joseph: and, as to Esau, he seems to have become a nation in a little time. We see hence that the most valuable blessings are often the longest ere they reach us. "The just shall live by faith."

There seems to be some difference between the account of Moses and that of Stephen in Acts vii. 14. Moses says, "All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides his sons' wives, were threescore and six.—Ver. 26. And all the souls of the sons of Jacob which came into Egypt," that is, first and last, including Jacob himself, his son Joseph, and his two sons Ephraim and Manasseh, who came in his loins, "were threescore and ten."—Ver. 27. But Stephen says, "Joseph called his father Jacob to him, and all his kindred, threescore and fifteen souls." Moses speaks of him and those who "descended from his loins," to the exclusion of his son's wives;" but Stephen of his *kindred* in general, which would include them.

Ver. 28. Drawing nigh to Egypt, Judah is sent before to apprize Joseph of his father's arrival. Judah had acquitted himself well in a former case of great delicacy, and this might recommend him in the present instance. He who could plead so well for his father shall have the honor of introducing him. It is fitting, too, that the father of the royal tribe, and of the Messiah himself, should not be the last in works of honor and usefulness, but rather that he should have the pre-eminence. When inquiry was made in the times of the judges, "Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first to fight against them? The Lord said, Judah shall go up."

Ver. 29. Joseph, on receiving the intelligence, makes ready his chariot to go and meet his father: for being in high office he must act accordingly; else another kind of carriage, or perhaps a staff only, would have satisfied him as well as his father; but situations in life often impose that upon humble minds which they would not covet

of their own accord. The interview is, as might be expected, tender and affecting. The account is short but appropriate. He presents himself to his venerable father; but, unable to speak, "fell upon his neck, and wept a good while!" And who that reflects on the occasion can forbear to weep with him?

Ver. 30. As to the good old man, he feels so happy that he thinks of nothing but dying. Perhaps he thought he should die soon: having enjoyed as much as he could desire in this world, it was natural now to wish to go to another. Having seen all things brought to so blessed an issue, both in his circumstances and in the character of his children, it is not surprising that he should now desire to quit the stage. "Lord, now let thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation!" Yet Jacob did not die for seventeen years; a proof this that our feelings are no certain rule of what shall befal us.

Ver. 31—34. As soon as the tenderness of the interview would permit, Joseph kindly intimates to his father and his brethren what was proper to be done, as to their being introduced to the king: and, that they might be prepared for that piece of necessary formality, he gives them some general instructions what to answer. And here it is observable how careful he is to keep them clear of the snares of Egypt. A high-minded young man would have been for introducing his relations into posts of honor and profit, lest they should disgrace him. But Joseph is more concerned for their purity than their outward dignity. "I will go before you," says he, "and tell the king that you are shepherds," and have been so all your lives, and your fathers before you. This will prevent his making any proposals for raising you to posts of honor in the state; and he will at once feel the propriety of assigning you a part of the country which is suited to the sustenance of your flocks and herds, and where you may live by yourselves uncontaminated by Egyptian customs. And when you come before the king, and he shall ask you of your occupation, then do you confirm what I have said of you: and as the employment of a shepherd is meanly accounted of in Egypt, and those that follow it are despised and reckoned unfit for the higer offices of the state, this will determine the king to say nothing to you on that subject, but to grant you a place in Goshen.

Thus, while men in general are pressing after the highest stations in life, and sacrificing every thing to obtain them, we see a man who had for nine years occupied one of these posts, and felt both its advantages and its disadvantages, carefully directing his dearest friends and relations into another track; acting up to Agur's prayer: "Give me neither poverty nor riches; but give me food convenient." The cool and sequestered path of life is the safest, happiest, and most friendly to true religion. If we wish to destroy our souls, or the souls of our children, let us seek, for ourselves and them, great things; but, if not, it becomes us, having food and raiment, therewith to be content. A rage for amassing wealth, or rising to eminence, is a whirlpool in which millions have perished.

DISCOURSE LV.

JOSEPH'S CONDUCT IN THE SETTLEMENT OF HIS BRETHREN, AND IN THE AFFAIRS OF EGYPT.

Gen. xlvii.

VER. 1, 2. Joseph having adjusted matters with his father and his brethren, with respect to their appearance before the king, takes with him five of the latter, and introduces them. His object is not merely a compliance with the rules of respect which were proper on such an occasion, but to obtain for them a residence in Goshen, where they might pursue their usual avocations, and be near unto him. To this end he mentions that they were in that part of the country with their flocks and their herds; hoping that this might induce the king to consent to their continuance there.

Ver. 3, 4. The young men appearing before Pharaoh, he asks them, as Joseph supposed he would, what was their occupation. A very proper question to be put by a magistrate to young men at any time; but the object in this case seems to have been to ascertain what posts in the state they were qualified to fill. He took it for granted that they were of some lawful calling; and every government has a right to require that those who enjoy its protection should not be mere vagrants, but by their industry contribute in some way to the public good. Their answer accords with their previous instructions: they were "shepherds, both they and their fathers." To this they added what was their wish, if it might please the king, which was, not to be naturalized, but merely to *sojourn* for a season in the country, with their flocks and their herds, which were starved out by the severity of the famine in their own land. This language implies their faith in the divine promises; for they that say such things declare plainly that they seek another country. It would also tend to second the endeavors of Joseph, in removing from the king's mind all thoughts of promoting

them to places of honor, and obtaining for them a residence in Goshen. Their answer concludes with an express petition for this object.

Ver. 5, 6. Pharaoh, turning himself to Joseph, with much politeness and frankness, thus addressed him: Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee: the land of Egypt is before thee. In the best of the land, in the land of Goshen, seeing they prefer it, let them dwell. And, as to promoting them, it does not seem to suit their calling or their inclinations to be raised in the manner which I might have proposed on their behalf: I will therfore leave it to you to make them happy in their own way. If there be one or more of them better qualified for business than the rest, let them be appointed chief of my herdsmen.

Ver. 7—10. The grand object being accomplished, all hearts are at rest, and now Joseph introduces to the king his aged father; not upon business, but merely in a way of respect. When the young men were presented, they *stood* before him; but Jacob, in honor of his years, and in compassion to his infirmities, is placed upon a *seat*. The first object that meets his eyes is Pharaoh, sitting in his royal robes before him. The sight of a prince who had shown such kindness to him and his, in a time of distress, calls forth the most lively sensations of gratitude, which he is prompted to express by a solemn blessing! How befitting and how affecting is this! It was reckoned by the apostle as a truth "beyond all contradiction that the less is blessed of the better," or greater. In one respect Pharaoh was greater than Jacob; but, in another, Jacob was greater than he; and Jacob knew it, and thought it no presumption to act upon such a principle. He was a son of Abraham, whose peculiar honor it was that he and his posterity should be blessings to mankind: "I will bless thee, and thou shalt be a blessing." He was also himself a man who, "as a prince had power with God and men, and prevailed." The blessing of such a man was of no small account; for God suffered not the words of his servants to fall to the ground.

It would seem at first sight as if Pharaoh was not struck with the blessing, but merely with the venerable aspect of the man, and therefore proceeded to inquire his age: but I incline to think he was chiefly struck with the former. He must have perceived a wide difference between this and any thing he had ever met with from the Egyptian sages, something heavenly and divine: and as the steward appeared to be well acquainted with the religion of the family, telling the brethren that "their God and the God of their father, had given them the treasure in their sacks" (chap. xliii. 23;) so we may suppose was Pharaoh himself. He would see also in this solemn blessing, in which Jacob no doubt made use of the name of the Lord, something perfectly correspondent with what might have been expected from the father of "a man in whom was the Spirit of God." If he felt the force of these things, it would overcome him, and render him scarcely able to speak; and hence it would be natural, in order to recover himself, to turn the conversation upon a less affecting topic, inquiring, "How old art thou?" The answer to this question is very pathetic and impressive: "The days of the years of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty years; few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage." We have a comment upon this answer in Heb. xi. 13, 14, where it is called a *confession*, and its implication is insisted on: "They that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country." We may see in it a charming example of spirituality, and how such a state of mind will find a way of introducing religion, even in answer to the most simple and common questions. We go into the company of a great man, and come away without once thinking of introducing religion: nay, it would seem to us almost rude to attempt it. But wherefore? Because of our want of spiritual-mindedness. If our spirits were imbued with a sense of divine things, we should think of the most common concerns of life in a religious way; and, so thinking of them, it would be natural to speak of them. Jacob, in answer to this simple question, introduces several important truths, and that without any force or awkwardness. He insinuates to Pharaoh that he and his fathers before him were strangers and pilgrims upon the earth; that their portion was not in this world, but in another; that the life of man, though it extended to a hundred and thirty years, was but a few days; that those few days were mixed with evil; all which, if the king properly reflected on it, would lead him to set light by the earthly glory with which he was loaded, and to seek a crown which fadeth not away. It is admirable to see how all these sentiments could be suggested in so prudent, so modest, so natural, and so inoffensive a manner. If Pharaoh was affected with Jacob's blessing him, and wished by his question to turn the conversation to something less tender, he would be in a manner disappointed. He is now in company with a man who, talk on what he will, will make him feel; and yet it shall be in a way that cannot hurt him, for he says nothing about him, but speaks merely of himself.

Having thus made a suitable *confession*, the patriarch, whose heart was full, could not take leave of the king without repeating his solemn blessing. Whether Pharaoh ever saw him again we are not told: but, if what was then said had a proper effect, he would remember this interview as one of the most interesting events of his life.

Ver. 11, 12. Joseph, having obtained the consent of the king, places his father and his brethren in the situation he intended, and there continues to nourish and cherish them, "as a little child is nourished." And thus he is made, more than at the birth of Manasseh, to forget all his toil and all the distresses which he had met with in his father's house.

Ver. 13—26. The sacred writer informs us, as a matter by the bye, of the state of things in Egypt during the remaining five years of famine, under Joseph's administration. The famine was so sore in the land that to purchase the necessaries of life, the inhabitants first parted with all their money; and not only they but the countries adjacent; so that the king's treasury became greatly enriched. And, when money failed, their cattle were required; and last of all their lands, and their persons, save only that the lands of their priests, or princes, were not sold: for being, according to the laws of the country considered as a part of the royal household, they were not under the necessity of selling their estates, but were participants of all the advantages which Pharaoh derived by Joseph.

This part of Joseph's conduct has been thought by some very exceptionable, as tending to reduce a nation to poverty and slavery. I am not sure that it was entirely right, though the parties concerned appear to have cast no reflection upon him. If it were not, it only proves that Joseph, though a good and great man, yet was not perfect. But difference of time and circumstances may render us incompetent to judge of his conduct with accuracy. The following remarks, if they do not wholly exculpate him, may at least serve greatly to extenuate the evil of his conduct. 1. He does not appear to have been employed by the country, but by the king only, and that for himself. He did not buy up corn during the plentiful years at the public expense, but at that of the king, paying the people the full price for their commodities, and, as it would seem, out of the king's private purse. 2. If the Egyptians had believed the word of God, as the king did, they had the same opportunity, and might have laid by grain enough, each family for itself, during the seven plentiful years, fully to have supplied their own wants during the years of famine. But it seems they paid no regard to the dreams nor to the interpretation, any more than the antediluvians did to the preparations of Noah. All the plenty which had been poured upon them, according as Joseph had foretold, did not convince them: the only use they made of it was to waste it in luxury as it came. It was just, therefore, that they should now feel some of the consequences. 3. In supplying their wants, it was absolutely necessary to distribute the provisions not by *gift* but by *sale;* and that according to what we should call the market price: otherwise the whole would have been consumed in half the time, and the country have perished. 4. The slavery to which they were reduced was merely that of being tenants to the king, who accepted of one-fifth of the produce for his rent. Indeed it was scarcely possible for a whole nation to be greatly oppressed, without being driven to redress themselves; and probably what they paid in aftertimes as a rent was much the same thing as we pay in taxes, enabling the king to maintain his state and support his government, without any other burdens. There is no mention, I believe, in history, of this event producing any ill effects upon the country. Finally: Whatever he did, it was not for himself, or his kindred, but for the king by whom he was employed. The utmost, therefore, that can be made of it to this disadvantage does not affect the disinterestedness of his character.

Ver. 27, 28. The sacred historian, now returning to Israel, informs us that they "dwelt in Goshen, and had possessions, and grew and multiplied exceedingly;" and this during the lifetime of Jacob, who lived seventeen years in Egypt. The vision which he had at Beersheba contained an intimation that he should die in that country, else we may suppose he would have been for returning as soon as the famine had subsided: but Jacob is directed by the will of heaven, as his descendants were by the cloud in the wilderness.

Ver. 29—31. And now, the time drawing nigh that Israel should die, he sends for his son Joseph, and engages him by a solemn oath to bury him, not in Egypt, but in the sepulchre of his fathers. This request was not merely the effect of natural affection, but of faith. As it was *by faith that Joseph gave commandment concerning his bones*, doubtless this arose from the same principle. The patriarch relying on the covenant made with his fathers, and believing that his posterity would hereafter possess the land, wished to lie among them, and to have his body carried up, to take a kind of previous possession on their behalf. To this request of his father Joseph readily consents. The venerable man, however, is not yet at the point of death, but is desirous of setting things in order, that when

he comes to die he may have nothing else to think about.

DISCOURSE LVI.

JOSEPH'S INTERVIEW WITH HIS DYING FATHER, WITH THE BLESSING OF HIS SONS.

Gen. xlviii

VER. 1. Jacob did not die immediately after having sent for his son Joseph; but he seems at that time to have been confined to his "bed," and probably it was by the same affliction which issued in his death. Joseph, as soon as he was told of his father being sick, without waiting to be sent for another time, proceeded to the place, and took his two sons to obtain his dying benediction.

Ver. 2. On entering the house his name is announced; the mention of which gives the venerable patriarch a portion of new life. He "strengthened himself and sat upon the bed." And now we may expect to hear something worthy of attention. The words of dying men to their children are, or should be, interesting, especially of good men, and still more of men inspired of God.

Ver. 3. The man of God has neither time nor strength to lose in ceremony: he comes therefore immediately to the point. "God Almighty," said he, "appeared to me at Luz, in the land of Canaan, and blessed me, and said unto me, Behold I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee; and I will make of thee a multitude of people, and will give this land to thy seed after thee, for an everlasting possession." Observe, 1. The appearance at Luz, or Bethel.—Chap. xxviii. If it was not the first time in which God had made himself known to Jacob, it was certainly the most remarkable epoch in his life; and almost all that had gone before it was nothing, or worse than nothing. 2. Though the mention of Luz, or Bethel, must ever be sweet to Jacob, and though he could have told what a support the promise there made had been to him through the pilgrimage of life, yet he confines himself at present to the aspect which it bore to his posterity, whom he was now about to bless. The promise made to Abraham's seed involved all the goodness intended for the world in after ages; and this occupies the chief attention of Jacob. The dying words of David dwell upon the same thing: the everlasting covenant, which contained "all his salvation, and all his desire," was that in which God had promised of his seed to raise up the Messiah, whose kingdom should endure to all generations. To "see the good of his chosen, to rejoice in the gladness of his nation, and to glory with his inheritance," is enough for a servant of God: and for an aged parent, after seeing much evil in his family, to be able to take leave of them in the full expectation of the divine blessing attending them, is a death which better characters than Balaam might wish to die. 3. The mention of Canaan to Joseph was designed to draw off his attention from a permanent settlement in Egypt, and to fix his faith upon the promise; that, like his fathers before him, he might pass his life as a pilgrim till it should be accomplished.

Ver. 4—7. And now, having given this general intimation to Joseph, he solemnly adopts his two sons, Ephraim and Menasseh, as his own, constituting them two tribes in Isrel. Thus Joseph had a double portion, the first birthright being taken from Reuben and given to him.—1 Chron. v. 1, 2. And thus his sons, as well as himself, were taught to fix their faith and hope, not in Egypt, whatever might be their expectations as the descendants of Joseph by an Egyptian princess, but in Canaan, or rather in the promise of the God of Israel. The mention of the death and burial of Rachel might be partly to furnish Joseph with another motive of attachment to Canaan; and partly to account for this double portion being conferred upon him, she being in the most proper sense his wife, and he in a sense his first-born son.

Ver. 8—11. Jacob had made mention of Ephraim and Manasseh before, but he had not seen them. Lifting up his eyes, he perceives two young men standing by the side of his beloved Joseph, and inquires who they are. "They are my sons," said Joseph, "whom God hath given me in this place." On this he requests them to be brought unto him, that he might bless them. He could scarcely see them, for his eyes were dim of age; but his heart was full of tenderness towards them, for their father's sake, and for the sake of the hope of which they were heirs; therefore he kissed and embraced them. And, being full of holy affection, he looks back upon his past sorrows, and admires the grace of God towards him and his. "I had not thought," said he to Joseph, "*to see thy face;* and, lo, God hath showed me also thy seed." How much better is God to us than our fears! Only let us wait with faith and patience, and our desponding thoughts will be turned into songs of praise.

Ver. 12—14. After this affectionate embrace Joseph brought forth the two young men from between his father's knees, and bowed himself with his face to the earth, in token of thankfulness for the kindness conferred upon himself and his sons, and in expectation of a farther blessing. And having

probably observed the order in which his father had spoken of them, putting Ephraim before Manasseh; ver. 5, he wished to correct it as a mistake, and therefore placed the young men according to their age, Ephraim towards Israel's left hand and Manasseh towards his right hand, and in this manner presented them before him. But the conduct of the patriarch was not thus to be corrected. God, from whom the blessing proceeded, directed him in this case to cross hands. Nor is this the only instance in which the order of nature is made to give way to that of grace; for of this Jacob himself had been an example.

Ver. 15. 16. In this attitude Jacob proceeds to bless the lads. "And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads! And let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers, Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth." Observe, 1. Though Ephraim and Manasseh were both constituted heads of tribes, yet they were blessed *in the person of their father Joseph:* He blessed *Joseph*, &c. In this, as in many other instances, God would exemplify the great principle on which he designed to act in blessing mankind in the name and for the sake of another. 2. Jacob, though now among the Egyptians, and kindly treated by them, yet makes no mention of their gods, but holds up to his posterity "the living and true God." In proportion as Egypt was kind to the young people, such would be their danger of being seduced: but let them remember the dying words of their venerable ancestor, and know whence their blessedness cometh. 3. The God whose blessing was bestowed upon them was not only the true God, but "the God of their fathers;" a God in covenant with the family, who loved them, and was loved and served by them. "God, before whom my fathers, Abraham and Isaac, did walk." How sweet and endearing the character; and what a recommendation of these holy patterns to the young people! Nor was he merely the God of Abraham and Isaac, but Jacob himself also could speak well of his name; adding, "The God who fed me all my life long unto this day!" Sweet and solemn are the recommendations of aged piety. "Speak reproachfully of Christ," said the persecutors to Polycarp, when leading him to the stake. "Eighty-six years I have served him," answered the venerable man, "during all which time he never did me any injury: how then can I blaspheme him who is my king and my Saviour?" Hearken, oh young people, to this affecting language! It is a principle dictated by common prudence, "Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not:" and how much more forcibly does it apply to the God of your fathers! 4. This God is called "the Angel who redeemed him from all evil." Who this was it is not difficult to decide. It was the Angel, no doubt, with whom Jacob wrestled and prevailed, and concerning whom he said, "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."—Ch. xxxii. 24—30. Hos. xii. 2. 5. The blessing of God, under all these endearing characters, is invoked upon the lads, their forefathers' names put upon them, and abundant increase promised to them. Surely it is good to be connected with them that fear God: yet those only who are of faith will ultimately be blessed with their faithful predecessors.

Ver. 17—20. Joseph's enjoyment of this sweet and solemn blessing was sadly interrupted by the unpleasant circumstance of his father's crossing his hands, and he could not refrain from respectfully remonstrating. Thus our frail minds are liable to be ruffled by some trivial event, even on the most solemn occasions, and so to lose the advantage of some of the happiest opportunities. Jacob, however, is not to be dissuaded. He had been guided by an unseen hand; and, like Isaac after having blessed him, he could not repent. "I know it, my son," said he, "I know it—He shall be great; but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he." God is as immutable as he is sovereign. It does not become us to contend with him; and it is to the honor of Joseph that, as soon as he perceived his father knew what he did, believing him to be directed from above, he acquiesced. Hence the patriarch went on without farther interruption, saying, "In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim, and as Manasseh!"

Ver. 21. A word or two more to Joseph, and the present interview is closed. "I die," said Israel; "but God shall be with you, and bring you again unto the land of your fathers." All that he had said before tended to break off their attachment to Egypt, and to fix their faith in the divine promise: such also was the design of these words. How satisfactory is it to a dying saint to consider that God lives, and will carry on his cause without him as well as with him. The great JOHN OWEN two days before he died (which was in 1683, a time when popery and arbitrary power threatened to overspread the land,) thus wrote in a letter to a friend:—"I am leaving the ship of the church in a storm; but, whilst the great Pilot is in it, the loss of a poor under-rower will be inconsiderable."

Ver. 22. One more special token of love is added to Joseph's portion; namely, a parcel of ground which had been originally bought of the sons of Hamor; but, as it would seem, being seized by some of their descendants, Jacob was necessiated to recover it by force of arms.—Ch. xxxiii. 18—20. This portion he gave to Joseph, and the tribe of Ephraim afterwards possessed it.—John iv. 5. The hazard at which this portion was obtained would no doubt endear it to Joseph; for we prize those things which they who were dear to us acquired at a great expense. On this principle we have often been admonished to hold fast our civil liberties. On this principle especially it becomes us to value our religious advantages, for which so much blood has been shed. And on this principle we are called to prize, more than any thing, the hope of the gospel, to obtain which our Saviour laid down his life!

DISCOURSE LVII.

JACOB'S BLESSING ON THE TRIBES.

Gen. xlix.

Ver. 1, 2. Jacob having blessed Joseph's sons, and feeling that he drew near his end, sent for the rest of his children, that he might in the same prophetic style declare to them what should befall them, and their posterity after them. The solemn manner in which he called them together and bespoke their attention shows that, being under a divine inspiration, he would deliver things of great importance, and such as, corresponding in many instances not only with the meaning of their names, but with their personal conduct, would furnish matter for reflection and encouragement.

Ver. 3, 4. *Reuben*, being his first-born son, is first addressed. He is reminded of his superior advantages. He was the first effect of "his might," or "the beginning of his strength;" and to him as such naturally belonged "the excellence of dignity, and the excellence of power." But, as Esau and others forfeited the birthright, so did Reuben. His character did not answer to the dignity of his situation. He is charged with being "unstable as water." The word is used I believe in only three other places in the Old Testament (Judges ix. 4, Jer. xxiii. 32, Zeph. iii. 4); and in them it is rendered *light*, or *lightness:* denoting not only a readiness to turn aside for want of solid principles, but that species of levity in particular which belongs to a lascivious mind, and which is ordinarily denominated *looseness*, or *lewdness*. Such was the spirit of Reuben, or he could not have acted as he did towards Bilhah, his father's wife.—Chap. xxxv. 22. The manner in which the patriarch expatiates upon this crime shows how henious it was in his eyes. "Thou wentest up to thy father's bed; then defiledst thou it." And, to show his abhorrence, he turns away from him, and addresses his other sons, as it were by way of appeal: "He went up to my couch!" For this lewd behavior he is told, *he shall not excel*. It is a brief mode of expression, alluding to the excellence of dignity and of power which pertained to him as the first-born; and denotes that all his advantages were reversed by his base conduct, and that which would otherwise have been a blessing was turned into a curse. The double portion was taken from him, and given, as we have seen, to Joseph (chap. xlviii. 5—7), the kingdom to Judah, and the priesthood to Levi; and thus the excellence of dignity, and the excellence of power, were separated from his tribe, which never sustained any conspicuous character in Israel.

From what is said of Reuben we may learn the offensive, the debasing, and the dangerous nature of that light-mindedness which indulges in filthiness and foolish talking, jesting, and lewd behavior. Such appears to have been the spirit of the false prophets in the times of Jeremiah, whose "lies and lightness" caused God's people to err.—Jer. xxiii. 32. And such, alas! is the character of too many who sustain the name of Christians, and even of Christian ministers, at this day. Assuredly they shall not excel; and, without repentance, woe unto them when God shall call them to account!

Ver. 5—7. The next in order of years are *Simeon and Levi*, who also in their posterity shall reap the bitter fruits of their early sins; and having not only descended from the same parents, but been associates in iniquity, they, according to the meaning of the name of the latter, are joined together in receiving the reward of it. At the time when these young men, with equal treachery and cruelty, took each his sword and slew the Shechemites, Jacob expressed his disapprobation of the deed; but now he censures it in the strongest terms. "Instruments of cruelty are in their habitations;" which is saying that they were bloody men. Ainsworth renders it, "sojourning habitations," which heightens the sin, as being committed in a place where they had no residence but by the courtesy of the country. "O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united!" What we cannot prevent, we

must be contented to disavow, having "no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness." These young men took counsel together: they were very careful to conceal their design from Jacob their father, knowing beforehand that he would be certain to oppose their schemes; and now Jacob is no less careful to disavow all connexion with them in the horrid deed. Such a disavowal, though it must give the most acute pain to the sons, yet was worthy of the father. A great deal of evil had been wrought in his family; but be it known to all the world, by the dying testimony which he bears against it, that it was altogether contrary to his mind. And, let young people hear and know that the crimes of youth will some time find them out. If they repent and obtain mercy, as there is reason to believe these young men did, yet they shall reap the bitter fruits of their sin in the present life: and, if they remain impenitent, tribulation and anguish will overtake them in the next.

The crime of these brethren is thus described: "In their anger they slew a man," even Hamor, king of the country, as well as Shechem his son; and that not in the open field of contest, but by assassination! Anger in general is outrageous; but in young men, whose immature judgment and slender experience afford but little check to it, is commonly the most mischievous. "In their self-will they digged down a wall" or, as some render it, "they houghed the oxen."* The former would express their breaking into houses to murder the inhabitants, and the latter their cruelty extending even to the dumb animals. Anger, when accompanied with *self-will*, rages like fire before the wind. How important is the goverment of one's own spirit: and, considering what human nature is, what a mercy it is that the wrath of man is under the divine control! If Simeon and Levi had not repented of this sin, it is likely that the curse, like that of Noah on Canaan, would have fallen upon their persons; but, as it was it alights only upon their dispositions and actions: "Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel!" God in mercy forgave them, but took vengeance of their inventions.

And, with respect to the tribes of which they were the heads, they were to be "divided and scattered in Israel." "The Levites," says Mr. Henry, "were scattered throughout all the tribes, and Simeon's lot lay not together, and was so strait that many of that tribe were forced to disperse themselves in quest of settlements and subsistence. This curse was afterwards turned into a blessing to the Levites; but the Simeonites, for Zimri's sin, had it bound on.—Numb. xxv. Shameful divisions are the just punishment of sinful unions and confederacies."

Ver. 8—12. From what was said of the first three sons, the rest might begin to tremble, lest the whole should be a succession of curses instead of blessings. But in what respects *Judah* we see a glorious reverse. The blessedness of this tribe principally consists in that blessing which was in it, the Lord Messiah. "Judah," saith the patriarch, "thou art he whom thy brethren shall *praise;* thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies: thy father's children shall bow down before thee." In the first sentence allusion is had to his name, which signifies *praise;* and the meaning of the whole is that this tribe should be distinguished, first by its victories over the Canaanites, and afterwards by its being the tribe which God would choose to bear *rule* in Israel. Hence also it is represented in verse 9, by a *lion*, the most majestic of animals, and the proper emblem of royalty. Much of this prophecy was doubtless fulfilled in David and his successors: but all was prefigurative of the Messiah, who, in allusion to this passage, is called, "the Lion of the tribe of Judah." In him all that is said of Judah is eminently fulfilled. He is indeed the object of praise, his hand has been in the neck of his enemies, and before him his brethren have bowed down. Grapling with the powers of darkness, we see him as a lion tearing the prey; ascending above all heavens, as a lion going up from the prey; and seated at the right hand of God, as a lion couchant, or at rest after his toils, where it is at the peril of the greatest monarchs to rouse him up.—Psa. ii 10—12.

That which before is represented under strong figures as in verse 10 declared plainly; viz. that Judah should be the governing tribe, and that its chief glory should consist in the Messiah, who should descend from it: yea, the very time of his coming is marked out. The sceptre, or government, should not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh came. The government departed, from ten tribes, out of the twelve, during the reign of Hezekiah, and has never been restored: but Judah continued to rule with God. At length they also were carried into captivity; yet God's eye was upon them, and in seventy years they were restored. And, notwithstanding the many overturnings of the diadem by the successive monarchies of Persia, Greece, and Rome, yet it continued till the coming of Christ. The

* Ενευροκόπησαν ταῦρον.—LXX. But rather, "They exterminated a prince."

theocracy then being dissolved, and the power given to him whose right it was, Judah in a few years ceased to be a body politic, or to have any government of its own. If there be such a thing as an irrefragable proof, surely this is one, that Shiloh the *peaceable*, the *prosperous*, the *Saviour*; is come; and it is a mark of judicial blindness and hardness of heart in the Jews that they continue to disbelieve it.

Of Shiloh it is added, "To him shall the gathering of the people be." As all the tribes of Israel gathered together, and anointed David king in Hebron; so all the tribes of man shall sooner or later submit to the kingdom of Christ. During his ministry, his enemies, touched with fear and envy, were ready to say, Behold the world is gone after him! And no sooner was he lifted up upon the cross than he began to draw all men unto him. Multitudes of his own countrymen, who had before seen no form or comeliness in him, now believed on him. Now also began to be fulfilled all the prophecies which had gone before, of the calling of the Gentiles. For such was the value of his sacrifice and mediation that it was considered as a light thing for him merely to raise up the tribes of Jacob: he must be a light to the Gentiles, and God's salvation to the ends of the earth. Nor has this promise yet spent its force: probably the greater part of it is yet to be fulfilled. What is foretold to the church in the 60th of Isaiah, of multitudes of all nations gathering together unto her, will be the accomplishment of this promise concerning Christ; for those that are gathered to her are first gathered to him.

The 11th and 12th verses are expressive of the great plenty of wine and milk which the tribe of Judah should possess. Vines, even the most choice, should be so common that you might have tied your beasts to them, as you would here tie them to an elm or ash; or so abundantly productive that it should be the ordinary practice to bind a colt to the vine, and load it with its fruits. Wine with them should be so plentiful that you might have washed your garments in it. The inhabitants, even the common people, might drink of it till their eyes were red; and such an abundance should there be of the milk of kine that their teeth might be white with it.* This *plenty* of milk and wine may have a farther reference, however, to the plenty of evangelical blessings under the reign of the Messiah, in the same manner as the dominion ascribed to Judah has an ultimate reference to his dominion. The language used by Isaiah, "Come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price," certainly refers to the great plenty of those articles in the land of promise, and seems to allude to the very words of Jacob in this prophecy.

Ver. 13. The blessing of *Zebulon* predicts the situation of that tribe in the promised land. They should be a maritime people, bordering upon the sea of Galilee eastward, and upon the Mediterranean on the west. Its "*border reaching unto Zidon*" does not mean the city, but the country of that name, that is, Phenicia. If the future settlement of the tribes had been of *choice*, it might have been said that they contrived to fulfil these predictions: but, being *by lot*, the hand of God is seen both in them and their accomplishment. There seems to be a distinction made between Zebulon being "*at* the haven of the sea," and his being "*for* a haven of ships." The former may denote his advantages; and the latter the benevolent use he should make of them, opening his harbors for the reception of distressed mariners. We have all our situations and advantages according to the will of God, and should be concerned to employ them to a good purpose. This tribe had also its disadvantages: being far from the seat of divine instruction, its inhabitants are described as "sitting in darkness." Upon them, however, the light of the gospel, by the personal ministry of our Lord, sprung up.

Ver. 14, 15. Next follows the blessing of *Issachar*. The character given to this tribe intimates that it should be addicted to husbandry, as Zebulon was to the dangers and perils of the sea. He is compared to a "strong ass, couching down between two burdens;" not on account of any thing mean in him, but for his industrious, patient, and peaceable disposition. This situation would neither require the heroic qualities of Judah, nor the enterprizing ones of Zebulon; and his disposition should coincide with it, preferring the fruits of peace and industry, though obliged to pay tribute for them, to the more splendid fortunes of commerce, or triumphs of war. Some men would pronounce Issachar, and those of his mind, mean spirits; but let not this part of the community be thought light of. If it be less brilliant, it is not less useful than the others. The king is served by the field. No condition of life has fewer temptations, nor is any more friendly to true religion. Though the people of this tribe were still and peaceable; yet there were among them "men who had understanding of the times, and who knew what Israel ought to do: nor was it any disparagement to their "brethren to be at their commandment."—1 Chron. xii. 32.

* Or it may be rendered,
His eyes shall be more sparkling than wine,
And his teeth whiter than milk. See LXX.

Ver. 16, 17. The blessing of *Dan* alludes to the meaning of his name, that is, *judging*, and signifies that he should maintain his authority; not only in respect of his rank among the tribes, but in the preservation of order in his own territory. His being compared to "a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse-heels, so that his rider shall fall backward," would seem to intimate, however, that the Danites would be a subtle and mischievous people, carrying on their wars more by stratagem and artful surprise than by conflict in the open field. Such were the wars of Sampson, who was of this tribe, against the Philistines.

Ver. 18. Here the man of God seems to have paused, perhaps on account of bodily weakness; and, lifting up his eyes to heaven, said, "I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord." Had these words followed the blessing of Judah, we might have supposed that the salvation he referred to was the coming Messiah: but, standing where it does, it appears to have been merely a sudden ejaculation, sent up at the close of his pilgrimage, in a view of being delivered from all its evils. It serves to show the state of the patriarch's mind; and that, while pronouncing blessings on his posterity, in respect to their settlement in the earthly Canaan, he was himself going to a better country, even a heavenly one.—When he thought that Joseph was dead, he talked of "going down into his grave mourning;" and afterwards when he found him alive, he seems as if he could have descended into it rejoicing (chap. xxxvii. 35; xlvi. 30:) but it was not for him to determine the time of his departure, but to wait his appointed time. Old age is the time for the patience of hope to bear its richest fruits: and a pleasant thing it is to see this and other graces in full bloom, while the powers of nature are falling into decay.

Ver. 19. The patriarch, resuming his subject, proceeds to bless the tribe of *Gad*. His name signified a *troop*, and it is intimated that they should be a warlike people. Their situation was east of Jordan, where they were exposed to the incursions of the neighbouring nations; particularly those of the Moabites, the Ammonites and the Syrians. But it is predicted that, however they might for a time be overcome, yet they should overcome at last; and this exactly accords with their history.—Judges x. xi. xii; 1 Chron. v. 18-22. In this blessing we see not only an example of the life of every believer, but the wisdom of God in so ordering it, as an antidote to presumption and despair. Present defeats have a tendency to preserve us from the one, and the promise of being finally victorious from the other.

Ver. 20. Next follows *Asher*, whose name signifies *the happy*, or *the blessed*, or *making happy;* and with his name corresponds his blessing. The meaning is, that his lot should be a rich one; yielding not only necessaries, but dainties, even royal dainties. Such is the lot of a few in this world, and it is well that it is but a few; for, while men are what they are, great fulness would soon render them like Sodom and Gomorrah.

Ver. 21. *Naphtali* is described by "*a hind let loose*," and is said to "give goodly words." The description would seem to hold up, not a warlike tribe, nor a tribe noted for its industry; but rather a people distinguished by their vivacity, timidity, and softness of manners. The diversity of natural dispositions contributes upon the whole to human happiness. Men have their partialities, some to this, and others to that; and, if their wishes could be gratified, would commonly shape all others by their own favorite model: but, after all, variety is the best. As the delicate could not subsist without the laborious and the resolute, so many a rugged spirit, both in the world and in the church, would be worse than useless, but for its union with others more gentle and affectionate.

Ver. 22—26. We next come to the blessing of *Joseph*, and on this the patriarch delights to dwell. His emblem, taken from the meaning of his name, is that of "a fruitful bough," situated by a well, by which its roots were watered, and its branches caused to run over the wall. The meaning is, that his posterity should be distinguished by their extraordinary increase. But now the imagery is dropped, or rather changed, and his personal history reviewed. He was attacked at an early period, as by a band of archers, who "sorely grieved him, shot at him, and hated him." There is a delicacy in his speaking of the brethren (who were standing by) in the third person rather than the second, and that under a figure: let him express it, however, in what form he will, they must feel it. He adds, "But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the mighty God of Jacob; from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel." As his brethren were a band of archers, he is described under the same character, but as one only against many. Their arrows were those of *hatred*, but his of love, overcoming evil with good. They strengthened one another in an evil cause; but he was strengthened by "the mighty God of Jacob." In these particulars, surely, he was a type of Christ; and still more in being, by the blessing of the God of Jacob, "the shepherd and stone of Israel;" *providing*

for their wants, and *supporting* their interests.

In blessing Joseph, Jacob feels his heart enlarged; pouring upon him the blessings of almighty God, the God of his father; blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts and of the womb; intimating also that his power of blessing when terminating on him exceeded that of his fathers, extending not only to the land in general, but to the very mountains on which his children should reside. And that which drew upon his head all these blessings was the painful, but endearing circumstance of his having been "separated from his brethren."

Joseph considered his separation as ordered of God for the good of others (ch. xlv. 7, 8;) and he seems all along to have acted upon this principle: but a life so spent shall lose nothing by it in the end. God will take care of that man, and pour the richest blessings upon his head, whose great concern it is to glorify him, and do good in his generation. Jacob felt much for Joseph's *separation*. The spirit of his benediction was, By how much he was afflicted for the sake of others, by so much let him be blessed and honored, and that to the latest posterity!—And such is the mind of God, and all his true friends, concerning a greater than Joseph. "For the suffering of death, he is crowned with glory and honor.—And I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the living creatures, and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying, WORTHY *is the Lamb that was slain* to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing!—Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to *Him* be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

Ver. 27. The last blessing is that of *Benjamin*. Of him it is said, "He shall ravin as a wolf: in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil." In this we see that it should be a warlike tribe; and this it was, or it could not have resisted all the tribes of Israel in the manner it did, as recorded in the last chapters of Judges. But this is saying no more than might have been said of many of the heathen nations. If Jacob had been influenced by natural affection, there had doubtless been something tender in the blessing of Benjamin, as well as in that of Joseph: but he was guided by a spirit of prophecy, and therefore foretold the thing as it was.

Ver. 28. Such were the tribes of Israel, and such "the blessings wherewith their father blessed them." But how blessed them? It might be thought that the first three at least were cursed, rather than blessed. No, they were rebuked, but not cursed, nor cast off, like Esau; they still continued among the tribes of Israel. It must have been very affecting for these brethren thus to stand by and hear, as from the mouth of God, what would be the consquences of their early conduct on their distant posterity: and, as their minds were now tender, it may be supposed to have wrought in them renewed repentance, or gratitude, as the subject required.

Ver. 29—33. The patriarch now gives directions concerning his burial. He desires to be interred, not in Egypt, but in the burying-place at Mamre, where lay Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, and Leah. If he had been governed by natural affection, he might have chosen to lie by the side of his beloved Rachel: but he "died in faith," and therefore requests to mingle dust with his fathers, who had been heirs with him of the same promise. Having said all he had to say, he cheerfully resigned his soul into the hands of him that gave it, and was numbered with his departed ancestors.

Thus died Jacob; a man whose conduct on some occasions was censurable, whose life was filled up with numerous changes, but whose end was such as his worst enemies might envy.

DISCOURSE LVIII.

THE BURIAL OF JACOB—JOSEPH REMOVES THE FEARS OF HIS BRETHREN—THE DEATH OF JOSEPH.

Gen. l.

VER. 1. We have seen the venerable patriarch yielding up the ghost; and now we see the expressions of affection toward him by the survivors. Let the memory of the just be blessed. It was revealed to Jacob in his life time that Joseph should "put his hand upon his eyes;" and Joseph not only did this, but in the fulness of his heart, "fell upon his face after he was dead, and wept upon him, and kissed him." This is all that we can do towards the most beloved objects, when death has performed his office. The mind is gone; the body only remains; and of this we must take a long farewell. Faith, however, looks forward to a joyful resurrection, and teaches us not to sorrow as those that have no hope.

Ver. 2. Joseph next proceeds to have the dead body embalmed with sweet spices. This was an art carried to great perfection in Egypt: the effects of it are not totally

extinct even to this day. It was suitably applied in the present instance, not only as an honor done to a great and good man, but as a means of preserving the body from putrefaction during its removal to Canaan.

Ver. 3. Nor was this the only honor that was paid to him. The family no doubt mourned very sincerely for him; and, to express their respect for Joseph, the Egyptians, probably the court and the gentry, went into mourning; and not merely forty days, which was customary it seems for every one who had the honor of being embalmed, but, in this instance, another month was added. The customs of polite nations, though often consisting of mere forms, yet serve in some instances to show what *should* be. They expressed, in this case a respect for departed worth, and a sympathy with afflicted survivors, weeping with them that weep.

Ver. 4—6. The days of formal mourning being ended, Joseph next proceeds to the burial of his father. But for this he must first obtain leave of absence from the king; and, desirous of conducting the business with propriety, he applies to some of the royal household to make the request for him: not, as some have supposed, because it was improper for him to appear before the king in mourning apparel; for "the days of his mourning were past;" but with a view of honoring the sovereign, and cultivating the esteem of those about him. A modest behavior is said to be rarely found in royal favorites: but by the grace of God it was found in Joseph. The plea he urged was nothing less than his being under a solemn oath, imposed upon him by the dying request of his father: a plea to which Pharaoh could make no objection, especially as it was accompanied with a promise of a return.

Ver. 7—11. We now behold the funeral procession. The whole family (except their little ones, who with their cattle were left behind,) were, as we should say, the first followers; but all the elders of respectability, of the court, and of the country, with both chariots and horsemen, were in the train. It was "a very great company," not only in number, but in quality. For grandeur and magnificence it is said to be without a parallel in history. This great honor was not in consequence of any wish on the part of Jacob: all he desired was, to be carried by his sons, and buried in the land of promise. His desire was that of faith, not of ambition. But, as in the case of Solomon, seeing he asked for that which God approved, he should have his desire in that, and the other should be added to it. Thus God delights to honor those who honor him. And, as it was principally *for Joseph's sake* that this great honor was conferred on his father, it shows in what high esteem he was held in Egypt, and serves to prove that whatever modern adversaries may say of his conduct, he was considered at the time as one of the greatest benefactors to the country.

Nothing remarkable occurred in the procession till they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which was within the land of Canaan, near to Jericho, and not many miles from the place of interment. Here they stopped, it would seem, for seven days, performing funeral obsequies, or "mourning with a great and sore lamentation." So great was it that it drew the attention of the Canaanites, who on seeing and hearing what passed, observed one to another, "This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians," (for such they considered them, seeing they came from Egypt;) wherefore the name of the place was afterwards called *Abel-Mizraim*—"the mourning of the Egyptians."

12—21. Joseph and his brethren, having buried their father in the place where he requested to lie, return to Egypt, with the company which went with them. The pomp and hurry of the funeral, while it lasted, would occupy their attention; but this having subsided, the thoughts of the ten brethren were directed to other things. The death of great characters being often followed by great changes, conscious guilt being always alive to fear, and the chasm which succeeds a funeral inviting a flood of foreboding apprehensions, they find out a new source of trouble: Peradventure, all the kindness hitherto shown us has been only for our father's sake . . . . Peradventure, Joseph, after all, never forgave us in his heart . . . . and now our father is dead so as not to be grieved by it, peradventure he will feel that hatred to us which we once felt to him; and, if so, he will certainly requite the evil which we have done unto him. Oh jealousy! Is it not rightly said of thee, Thou art cruel as the grave?

But how can they disclose their suspicions? To have done it personally would have been too much for either him or them to bear, let him take it as he might. So they "sent messengers unto him," to sound him. We know not who they were; but, if Benjamin was one of them, it is no more than might be expected. Mark the delicacy and exquisite tenderness of the message. Nothing is said of their suspicions, only that the petition implies them: yet it is expressed in such a manner as cannot offend, but must needs melt the heart of Joseph, even though he had been possessed of less affection than he was. 1. They introduce themselves as acting under the direction of a mediator, and this mediator was none other than their deceased father. He com-

manded us, say they, before he died, that we should say thus and thus. And was it possible for Joseph to be offended with them for obeying *his* orders? But stop a moment—May not *we* make a similar use of what our Saviour said to us before he died? He commanded us to say, "Our Father—forgive us our debts." Can we not make the same use of this as Jacob's sons did of their father's commandment? 2. They present the petition as *coming from their father*. "Forgive, I pray thee, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin; for they did unto thee evil." And was it possible to refuse complying with his father's desire? The intercessor, it is to be observed, does not go about to extenuate the sin of the offenders; but frankly acknowledges it, and that, if justice were to take its course, they must be punished. Neither does he plead their subsequent repentance as the ground of pardon; but requests that it may be done for *his* sake, or on account of the love which the offended bore to him. 3. They unite their own confession and petition to that of their father. It was certainly proper that they should do so: for, though they no more plead their own repentance as the ground of forgiveness than the mediator had done, yet it was fit they should repent, and acknowledge their transgressions, ere they obtained mercy. Moreover, though they must make no merit of any thing pertaining to themselves; yet, if there be a character which the offended party is known to esteem above all others, and they be conscious of sustaining that character, it will be no presumption to make mention of it. And this is what they do, and that in a manner which must make a deep impression upon a heart like that of Joseph. "And now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father!" It were sufficient to have gained their point, even though Joseph had been reluctant, to have pleaded their being children of the same father, and that father making it, as it were, his dying request; but the consideration of their being *the servants of his father's God* was overcoming. Were we to look back to some former periods of their history, we could not have considered them as entitled to this character: but since that time God had brought them through a series of trials, by means of which he had turned them to himself. And though they are far from considering their present state of mind as obliterating the guilt of their former crimes, yet, knowing that Joseph was himself a servant of God, they knew that this consideration would make a deep impression upon him. It is no wonder that, at the close of this part of the story, it should be added, "And Joseph wept when they spake unto him!"

But this is not all: they go in person, and "fall before his face," and offer to be his *servants*. This extreme abasement of their part seems to have given a kind of gentle indignancy to Joseph's feelings. His mind revolted at it. It seemed to him too much. "Fear not," saith he; "for am I in the place of God?" As if he should say, It may belong to God to take vengeance: but for a sinful worm of the dust, who himself needs forgiveness, to do so, were highly presumptuous: you have therefore nothing to fear from me. What farther forgiveness you need, seek it of him.

Ver. 20, 21. There was a delicacy in the situation of the ten brethren, in respect to this application to Joseph, as it would imply a doubt of his former sincerity. They were aware of this, and therefore in every thing they say, whether by messengers or in personal interview, are careful to avoid touching upon that subject. Nor is there less delicacy in Joseph's answer. He does not complain of this implication, nor so much as mention it: but his answering them in nearly the same words as he had done seventeen years before. "Ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass as it is this day, to save much people alive;" I say, his answering them in this language was saying in effect, Your suspicions are unfounded: what I told you seventeen years ago I meant; and the considerations which then induced me to pass over induce me still to do the same. "Now, therefore, fear ye not: I will nourish you and your little ones." I will not be your *master*, but your brother, and, as it were your father. In this manner did he "comfort them, and spake kindly unto them."

Ver. 22, 23. Joseph was about fifty-six yeas old when his father died; he must therefore have lived fifty-four years afterwards; during which period he saw Ephraim's children, of the third generation; and the grandsons of Manasseh were brought up, as it were, upon his knees.

Ver. 24—26. And now the time draws near that Joseph also must die; and like his worthy ancestors he dies *in faith*. 1. He is persuaded of the truth of God to his covenant promises. "I die," saith he; "and God shall surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." 2. Under the influence of this persuasion he takes "an oath of the children of Israel," that when they should depart from Egypt they would take his "bones with them." Such a desire might have arisen merely from a wish to mingle dust with his forefathers: but we are directed to attribute it to a higher motive. It is in reference to

this exercise of faith that his name is enrolled in the catalouge of believing worthies.—Heb. xi. 22. Having said all he wished to say, "he died, being a hundred and ten years old; and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt. As the burial of Jacob in Canaan would attract the minds of Israel to that country, so the depositing of Joseph in a moveable chest, together with his dying word, would serve as a memento that Egypt was not their home.

CONCLUSION.

I HAVE endeavored to intersperse reflections on the various subjects as they have occurred; but there are a few others which arise from a review of the whole; and with these I shall conclude.

First: *The truth of revelation, and its leading doctrines.* That which accounts for things as they are, or as they actually exist in the world, and that in such a manner as nothing else does, carries in it its own evidence. Look at things as they are, and look at this, and you will find that as face answereth to face in water, so doth the one answer to the other.

Look at the material creation around you, and ask the philosophers of all ages how it came into being. One ascribes it to a fortuitous assemblage of atoms; another conceives matter to have been eternal; another imagines God himself a material being. But revelation, like the light shining upon chaos, dissipates in a few words all this darkness, informing us that "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."

Look at human nature as it now is: depraved, miserable, and subject to death. Ask philosophy to account for this. The task will be found to surpass its powers. None can deny the fact that men are what they ought not to be; but how they came to be so cannot be told. To say, as many do, that the stock is good, but that it gets corrupt in rearing, is to reason in a manner that no one would have the face to do in any other case. If a tree were found which in every climate, every age, every soil, and under every kind of cultivation, brought forth the fruits of death, nobody would hesitate to pronounce it of a *poisonous nature.* Such is the account given us by revelation and this book informs us how it became so. It is true it does not answer curious questions on this awful subject. It traces the origin of evil as far as sobriety and humility would wish to enquire. It states the fact, that God hath "made man upright," and that he "hath sought out many inventions;" but there it leaves it. If men will object to the equity of the divine proceedings, and allege that what is in consequence of their first father's transgression is on their part guiltless, they must go on to object. Every man's conscience tells him that he is accountable for all he does from choice, let that choice have been influenced by what it may; and no man thinks of excusing his neighbor for his ill conduct towards him because he is a son of Adam. Out of their own mouth, therefore, will such objectors be judged.—But if the doctrine of the fall, as narrated in this book, be admitted, that of salvation by free grace, through the atonement of Christ will follow of course. I do not say that redemption by Christ could be inferred from the fall itself; but, being revealed in the same sacred book, we cannot believe the one without feeling the necessity of the other.

Look at the page of history, and you will find yourselves in a world of the existence of which you can find no traces till within about four thousand years. All beyond is darkness; and all pretensions to earlier records carry in them self-evident marks of fable. These things are accounted for in this book. If the world was destroyed by a flood, there could no nations have existed till a little before the times of Abraham. Nay, this book gives us the origin of all the nations, and calls many of them by the names which they sustain to this day.

Finally: Look at the antipathy which is every where to be seen between the righteous and the wicked, between them that fear God and them that fear him not. All the narratives which have passed under review, as those of Cain and Abel, Enoch and his contemporaries, Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, are pictures of originals which the world continues in every age to exhibit. But this book traces this antipathy to its source, and gives us reason to expect its continuance till Satan and his cause shall be bruised under our feet.

Secondly: *The peculiar characters of sacred history.* It is the most *concise* and yet *comprehensive*, of any record that has ever yet appeared in the world. In the book of Genesis only we have gone over the history of two thousand, three hundred, and sixty-nine years. A common historian might have used more words in giving us an account of one of Nimrod's expeditions. Yet it is not like the abridged histories of human writers, which often contain a string of unconnected facts, which leave no impression, and are nearly void of useful information. You see human nature, as created, as depraved and as renewed by the grace of God: you see the motives of men and the reason of things so as to enable you to draw from every story some import-

ant lesson, some warning, caution, counsel, encouragement, or instruction in righteousness.

The reason of so much being included in so small a compass is, it is *select*. It is not a history of the world, but of persons and things which the world overlooks. It keeps one great object always in view; namely, *the progress of the church of God*, and touches other societies and their concerns only incidentally, and as they are connected with it. The things which are here recorded are such as would have been mostly overlooked by common historians, just as things of the same kind are overlooked to this day. If you read many of even our church histories, you will perceive but little of the history of true religion in them. There are more of the genuine exercises of grace in a page of the life of Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob, than you will frequently find here in a volume. If the world overlooks God and his cause, God, in return, overlooks them and theirs. His history holds up an Enoch and preserves a Noah, while a world lying in wickedness is destroyed by an overwhelming flood. It follows an Abraham, an Isaac, a Jacob, and a Joseph, through all their vicissitudes, narrating the trials and triumphs of faith in these holy men; while the Ishmaels, the Esaus, and all who apostatized from the true God, are given up, and lost in the great world. It traces the spiritual kingdom of God to its smallest beginnings, and follows it through its various obstructions; while the wars, conquests, and intrigues of the great nations of antiquity are passed over as unworthy of notice. In all this we see that the things which are highly esteemed among men are but lightly accounted of by the Lord; and that He who hath heaven for his throne, and earth for his footstool, overlooks both in comparison of a poor and contrite spirit.

Lastly: *The slow but certain progress of the divine designs.* God promised Abraham a son when he was seventy-five years old; but he was not born till he was a hundred. And, when he is born he lives forty years unmarried: and when married, under an expectation of great fruitfulness, it is twenty years more ere Rebecca bears children; and then it is not without earnest prayer. And, now that he has two sons born, Jacob, in whom the promise is to be fulfilled, lives seventy-five years single, and his life is a kind of blank: and, when he goes to padan-aram for a wife, he must wait seven years longer ere he obtains her: and when he has a family of children, they prove some of the worst of characters. The only one that is any way hopeful is taken away, he knows not how; and a long series of afflictions follow, one upon another, ere any thing like hope makes its appearance. Yet all this while the Lord had promised, "I will surely do thee good;" and in the end the good is done. God's ways fetch an astonishing compass. His heart is large, and all his plans are great. He does not make haste to fulfil his counsels; but waits, and causes us to wait, the due time. But at that time they are all fulfilled.

We may observe a difference, however, as to the time taken for the fulfilment of different promises. Those which were made to Abraham's other children, and which had no immediate relation to God's spiritual kingdom, as has been remarked in the course of the work, were very soon accomplished, in comparison of that which was confined to Isaac. Small legacies are often received and spent before the heir comes to the full possession of his inheritance. And even those which are made to the church of God, and have respect to his spiritual kingdom, vary in some proportion to their magnitude. "God made promise of a son to Abraham: *five-and twenty years* elapse ere this is accomplished. He also promised the land of Canaan for a possession to his posterity: there the performance required a period of *nearly five hundred years*. At the same time Abraham was assured that the Messiah should descend from his loins, and that in him all the nations of the earth should be blessed: this promise was *nearly two thousand years* ere it came to pass. These events resemble the oval streaks in the trunk of a tree, which mark its annual growth: each describes a larger compass than that which precedes it, and all which precede it are preparatory to that which follows. The establishment of Abraham's posterity in Canaan was a greater event than the birth of Isaac, and greater preparations were made for it. But it was less than the coming of Christ, and required less time and labor to precede it."

From this ordinary ratio, if I may so speak, in the divine administration, we are furnished with motives to patience, while waiting for the fulfilment of promises to the church in the latter days. The things promised are here so great and so glorious that they may well be supposed to fetch a large compass, and to require a period of long and painful suspense ere they are accomplished. The night may be expected to bear some proportion to the day that succeeds it. It is a consolation, however, that the night with us is far spent and the day is at hand. The twelve hundred and sixty years of antichrist's dominion, and of the church's affliction, must needs be drawing towards a close; and a season so dark, and so long, augurs glorious times before us. We may have our seasons of despondency,

like the patriarchs; but there will come a time, and that probably not very distant, when what is said of Israel in the times of Joshua shall be fulfilled on a larger scale: "And the Lord gave them rest round about, according to all that he sware unto their fathers—There failed not aught of any good thing which *the Lord* had spoken unto the house of Israel; all come to pass."

THE END.



THE HOLY WAR.

MADE BY

SHADDAI UPON DIABOLUS,

FOR THE

REGAINING THE METROPOLIS OF THE WORLD;

OR, THE

LOSING AND TAKING AGAIN OF THE TOWN OF MANSOUL.

BY JOHN BUNYAN.

I have used similitudes.—*Hosea, xii.* 10.

THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE HOLY WAR.

Some say the Pilgrim's Progress is not mine,
Insinuating as if I would shine
In name and fame by the worth of another,
Like some made rich by robbing of their brother;
Or, that so fond I am of being sire,
I'll father bastards; or, if need require,
I'll tell a lie in print to get applause.
I scorn it: John such dirt-heap never was,
Since God converted him. Let this suffice
To show why I my Pilgrim patronize.
It came from mine own heart, so to my head,
And thence into my fingers trickled:
Then to my pen, from whence immediately
On paper I did dribble it daintily.
Manner and matter too was all mine own,
Nor was it unto any mortal known,
'Till I had done it. Nor did any then,
By books, by wits, by tongues, or hand or pen,
Add five words to it, or write half a line
Thereof: the whole, and every whit is mine,
Also for this thine eye is now upon,
The matter in this manner came from none
But the same heart and head, fingers and pen,
As did the other. Witness all good men:
For none in all the world, without a lie,
Can say that this is mine, excepting I.
I write not this of any ostentation,
Nor 'cause I seek of men their commendation;
I do it to keep them from such surmise,
As tempt them will my name to scandalize.

TO THE READER.

'Tis strange to me, that they that love to tell
Things done of old, yea, and that do excel
Their equals in historiology,
Speak not of Mansoul's wars, but let them lie

Dead like old fables, or such worthless things,
That to the reader no advantage brings;
When men, let them make what they will their own,
Till they know this, are to themselves unknown.
Of stories, I well know there's divers sorts;
Some foreign, some domestic; and reports
Are thereof made as fancy leads the writers;
(By books a man may guess at the inditers.)
Some will again of that which never was,
Nor will be, feign (and that without a cause)
Such matter, raise such mountains, tell such things
Of men, of laws, of countrys and of kings;
And in their story seems to be so sage,
And with such gravity clothe every page,
That though their fronticepiece says all is vain,
Yet to their way disciples they obtain.
But, readers, I have somewhat else to do,
Than with vain stories thus to trouble you;
What here I say, some men do know so well,
They can with tears and joy the story tell.
The town of Mansoul is well known to many,
Nor are her troubles doubted of by any
That are acquainted with those histories,
That Mansoul and her wars anatomize.
Then lend thine ear to what I do relate,
Touching the town of Mansoul and her state;
How she was lost, took captive, made a slave;
And how against him set that should her save.
Yea, how by hostile ways she did oppose
Her Lord, and with his enemy did close.
For they are true, him that will them deny,
Must needs the best of records vilify.
For my part, I myself was in the town,
Both when it 'twas set up, and when pulling down;
I saw Diabolus in his possession,
And Mansoul also under his oppression.
Yea, I was there when she owned him for Lord,
And to him did submit with one accord.
When Mansoul trampled upon things divine,
And wallowed in filth as doth a swine;
When she betook herself unto her arms,
Fought her Emmanuel, dispis'd his charms,
Then I was there, and did rejoice to see
Diabolus and Mansoul so agree.
Let no man then count me a fable-maker,
Nor make my name or credit a partaker
Of their derision: what is here in view,
Of mine own knowledge I dare say is true.
I saw the Prince's armed men come down,
By troops, by thousands, to besiege the town.
I saw the captains, heard the trumpets sound,
And how his forces covered all the ground.
Yea, how they set themselves in battle-ray,
I shall remember to my dying day.
I saw the colors waving in the wind,
And they within to mischief how combin'd,
To ruin Mansoul, and to make away
Her *primum mobile* without delay.
I saw the mounts cast up against the town,
And how the slings were plac'd to beat it down.
I heard the stones fly whizzing by mine ears,
(What longer kept in mind than got in fears?)
I heard them fall, and saw what work they made,
And how old Mars did cover with his shade
The face of Mansoul; and I heard her cry,
Woe worth the day, in dying I shall die.
I saw the battering-rams, and how they play'd,
To beat ope Ear-gate, and I was afraid,
Not only Ear-gate, but the very town,
Would by those battering-rams be beaten down.
I saw the fights, and heard the captains' shout,
And in each battle saw who faced about;
I saw who wounded were, and who were slain,
And who when dead, would come to life again.
I heard the cries of those that wounded were.
(While others fought like men bereft of fear)
And while the cry, kill, kill, was in mine ears,
The gutters ran, not so with blood as tears.
Indeed the captains did not always fight,
But then they would molest us day and night;
Their cry, Up, fall on, let us take the town,
Kept us from sleeping, or from lying down.
I was there when the gates were broken ope,
And saw how Mansoul then was stript of hope.
I saw the captains march into the town,
How there they fought, and did their foes cut down.
I heard the Prince bid Boanerges go
Up to the castle, and there seize his foe,
And saw him and his fellows bring him down,
In chains of great contempt quite through the town.
I saw Emanuel when he possess'd
His town of Mansoul, and how greatly bless'd
A town, his gallant town of Mansoul was,

When she receiv'd his pardon, lov'd his laws.
When the Diabolonians were caught,
When tried, and when to execution brought,
Then I was there: yea, I was standing by,
When Mansoul did the rebels crucify.
I also saw Mansoul clad all in white,
And heard her Prince call her his heart's delight.
I saw him put upon her chains of gold,
And rings and bracelets, goodly to behold.
What shall I say? I heard the people's cries,
And saw the Prince wipe tears from Mansoul's eyes.
I heard the groans, and saw the joy of many,
Tell you of all, I neither will, nor can I.
But by what here I say, you well may see
That Mansoul's matchless wars no fables be.
Mansoul the desire of both Princes was,
One keep his gain would, t'other gain his loss;
Diabolus would cry, the town is mine;
Emmanuel would plead a right divine
Unto his Monsoul; then to blows they go,
And Mansoul cries, these wars will me undo.
Mansoul! her wars seemed endless in her eyes,
She's lost by one, becomes another's prize,
And he again that lost her last would swear,
Have her I will, or her in pieces tear.
Mansoul, it was the very seat of war,
Wherefore her troubles greater were by far,
Than only where the noise of war is heard,
Or where the shaking of a sword is fear'd,
Or only where small skirmishes are fought,
Or where the fancy fighteth with a thought,
She saw the swords of fighting men made red,
And heard the cries of those with them wounded,
Must not their frights then be much more by far,
Than theirs who to such doings strangers are?
Or theirs that hear the beating of a drum,
But not made fly for fear from house or home.
Mansoul not only heard the trumpets sound,
But saw her gallants gasping on the ground.
Wherefore we must not think that she could rest
With them whose greatest earnest is but jest;
Or where the blust'ring threat'ning of great wars
Do end in parleys, or in wording jars.
Mansoul, her mighty wars they did portend
Her weal or woe, and that world without end.
Wherefore she must be more concern'd than they,
Whose fears begin and end the self-same day,
Or where none other harm doth come to him
That is engag'd, but loss of life or limb,
As all must needs confess that now to dwell
In Universe, and can this story tell.
Count me not then with them, that to amaze
The people, set them on the stars to gaze,
Insinuating with much confidence,
That each of them is now the residence
Of some brave creatures: yea, a world they will
Have in each star, though it be past their skill
To make it manifest to any man,
That reason hath, or tell his fingers can.
But I have too long held thee in porch,
And kept thee from the sunshine with a torch.
Well, now, go forward, step within the door,
And there behold five hundred times much more
Of all sorts of such inward rarities
As please the mind will, and will feed the eyes;
With those, which, if a Christian, thou wilt see,
Not small, but things of greatest moment be.
Nor do thou go to work without my key,
(In mysteries men soon do lose their way;)
And also turn it right, if thou wouldst know
My riddle, and wouldst with my heifer plough.
It lies there in the window, fare the well,
My next may be to ring thy passing bell.

JOHN BUNYAN.

THE HOLY WAR.

In my travels, as I walked through many regions and countries, it was my chance to happen into that famous continent of Universe. A very large and spacious country it is. It lieth between the two poles, and just amidst the four points of the heavens. It is a place well watered, and richly adorned with hills and valies, bravely situate: and for the most part, (at least where I was,) very fruitful, also well peopled and a very sweet air.

The people are not all of one complexion, nor yet of one language, mode, or way of religion; but differ as much, it is said, as do the planets themselves. Some are right, and some are wrong, even as it happeneth to be in lesser regions.

In this country, as I said, it was my lot

to travel, and there travel I did, and that so long, even till I learned much of their mother tongue, together with the customs and manners of them among whom I was. And to speak the truth, I was much delighted to see and hear many things which I saw and heard among them; yea, I had, to be sure, even lived and died among them, (so was I taken with them and their doings,) had not my Master sent for me home to his house, there to do business for him, and to oversee business done.

Now there is in this gallant country of Universe, a fair and delicate town, a corporation, called Mansoul: a town for its buildings so curious, for its situation so commodious, for its privileges so advantageous, I mean with reference to its original, that I may say of it, as was said before of the continent in which it is placed, there is not its equal under the whole heaven.

As to the situation of this town, it lieth just between the two worlds, and the first founder and builder of it, so far as by the best and most authentic records I can gather, was one Shaddai, and he built it for his own delight. He made it the mirror and glory of all that he made; even the top piece beyond any thing else that he did in that country: yea, so goodly a town was Mansoul, when it was first built, that it is said by some, the gods, at the setting up thereof, came down to see it, and sang for joy. And as he made it goodly to behold, so also mighty to have dominion over all the country round about. Yea, all was commanded to acknowledge Mansoul for their Metropolitan; all was enjoined to do homage to it; ay, the town itself had positive commission and power from her King, to demand service of all, and also to subdue any, that anywise denied to do it.

There was reared up in the midst of this town, a most famous and stately palace; for strength it might be called a castle; for pleasantness, a paradise; for largeness a place so copious, as to contain all the world. This place the King Shaddai intended for himself alone, and not another with him; partly because of his own delights, and partly because he would not that the terror of strangers should be upon the town. This place Shaddai made also a garrison of, but committed the keeping of it only to the men of the town.

The wall of the town was well built, yea, so fast and firm was it knit and compact together, that had it not been for the townsmen themselves, they could not have been shaken or broken for ever.

For here lay the excellent wisdom of him that built Mansoul, that the walls could never be broken down nor hurt, by the most mighty adverse potentates, unless the townsmen gave consent thereto.

This famous town of Mansoul had five gates, in at which to come, out at which to go, and these were made likewise answerable to the walls, to wit, impregnable, and such as could never be opened nor forced, but by the will and leave of those within. The names of the gates were these: Ear-gate, Eye-gate, Mouth-gate, Nose-gate, and Feet-gate.

Other things there were that belonged to the town of Mansoul, which if you adjoin to these will yet give further demonstration to all, of the glory and strength of the place. It had always a sufficiency of provisions within its walls; it had the best, most wholesome, and excellent law that then was extant in the world. There was not a rascal, rogue, or traitorous person then within its walls; they were all true men, and fast joined together, and this you know is a great matter. And to all these it had always (so long as it had the goodness to keep true to Shaddai the King) his countenance, his protection, and it was his delight &c.

Well, upon a time, there was one Diabolus, a mighty giant, made an assault upon this famous town of Mansoul to take it, and make it his own habitation. This giant was king of the dark regions, and a most raving prince he was. We will, if you please, first discourse of the original of this Diabolus, and then of his taking of this famous town of Mansoul,

This Diabolus is indeed a great and mighty, prince and yet both poor and beggarly. As to his original, he was at first one of the servants of King Shaddai, made, and taken, and put by him into most high and mighty place, yea, was put into such principalities as belonged to the best of his territories and dominions. This Diabolus was made son of the morning, and a brave place he had of it; it brought him much glory, and gave him much brightness, an income that might have contented his Luciferian heart, had it not been insatiable, and enlarged as hell itself.

Well, he seeing himself thus exalted to greatness and honor, and raging in his mind for higher estate and degree, what doth he, but begins to think with himself, how he might be set up as Lord over all, and have the sole power under Shaddai. (Now that did the king reserve for his Son, yea, and had already bestowed it upon him.) Wherefore, he first consults with himself what had best to be done, and then breaks his mind to some other of his companions, to the which they also agreed. So in fine they came to this issue, that they should make an attempt upon the King's Son, to destroy him, that the inheritance might be theirs. Well, to be short, the treason, as I said, was concluded, the time

appointed, the word given, the rebels rendezvoused, and the assault attempted. Now the King and his Son, being all and always eye, could not but discern all passages in his dominions; and he having always love for his Son as for himself, could not, at what he saw, but be greatly provoked and offended; what does he, but takes them in the very nick; and the first trip that they made toward their design, convicts them of their treason, horrid rebellion, and conspiracy, that they had devised, and now attempted to put into practice; and casts them all together out of all place of trust, benefit, honor, and preferment. This done, he banishes them the court, turns them down into the horrible pits, as fast bound in chains, never more to expect the least favor from his hands, but to abide the judgment that he had appointed, and that for ever and ever.

Now, they being thus cast out of all place of trust, profit, and honor, and also knowing that they had lost their prince's favor for ever, being banished his courts and cast down to the horrible pits; you may be sure they would now add to their former pride, what malice and rage against Shaddai, and against his Son, they could. Wherefore, roving and ranging in much fury from place to place, (if perhaps they might find something that was the King's, to revenge, by spoiling of that, themselves on him,) at last they happened into this spacious country of Universe, and steer their course towards the town of Mansoul; and considering that that town was one of the chief works and delights of King Shaddai, what do they, but, after counsel taken, make an assault upon that. I say, they knew that Mansoul belonged unto Shaddai, for they were there when he built it, and beautified it for himself. So when they had found the place they shouted horribly for joy, and roared on it as a lion upon the prey, saying, Now we have found the prize, and how to be revenged on King Shaddai for what he hath done to us. So they sat down, and called a council of war and considered with themselves what ways and methods they had best to engage in, for the winning to themselves this famous town of Mansoul; and these four things were then propounded to be considered of:

1. Whether they had best, all of them, to show themselves in this design to the town of Mansoul?

2. Whether they had best to go and sit down against Mansoul, in their now ragged and beggarly guise?

3. Whether they had best show to Mansoul their intentions, and what design they came about, or whether to assault it with words and ways of deceit?

4. Whether they had not best, to some of their companions, to give out private orders to take the advantage, if they see one or more of the principal townsmen, to shoot them; if thereby they should judge their cause and design will the better be promoted?

It was answered, to the first of these proposals, in the negative, to wit, That it would not be best that all should show themselves before the town; because the appearance of many of them might alarm and fright the town; whereas a few, or but one of them, was not likely to do it. And to enforce this advice to take place, it was added further, that if Mansoul was frighted, or did take the alarm, it is impossible, said Diabolus, (for he spake now) that we should take the town; for that none can enter into it without its own consent. Let therefore but few, or but one, assault Mansoul and in mine opinion said Diabolus, let me be he. Wherefore to this they all agreed; and

Then to the second proposal they came, namely, whether they had best to go and sit down before Mansoul in their now ragged and beggarly guise? To which it was answered also in the negative, By no means; and that because though the town of Mansoul had been made to know, and to have to do before now, with things that are invisible, they did never as yet see any of their fellow-creatures in so sad and rascally a condition as they. And this was the advice of that fierce Alecto. Then said Apollyon, the advice is pertinent; for even one of us, appearing to them as we are now, must needs both beget and multiply such thoughts in them, as will both put them into a consternation of spirit, and necessitate them to put themselves upon their guard; and if so, said he, then, as my Lord Alecto said but now, it is in vain for us to think of taking the town. Then said that mighty giant Beelzebub, The advice that already is given is safe, for though the men of Mansoul have seen such things as we once were, yet hitherto they did never behold such things as we now are: and it is best, in mine opinion, to come upon them in such a guise as is common to, and most familiar among them. To this when they had consented, the next thing to be consdiered was, in what shape, hue, or guise, Diabolus had best to show himself, when he went about to make Mansoul his own. Then one said one thing, and another the contrary: at last, Lucifer answered, that in his opinion, it was best that his lordship should assume the body of some of those creatures that they of the town had dominion over; for, quoth he, these are not only familiar to them, but being under them, they will never imagine

that an attempt should by them be made upon the town; and to blind all, let him assume the body of one of these beasts that Mansoul deems to be wiser than any of the rest. This advice was applauded of all; so it was determined that the giant Diabolus should assume the dragon, for that he was in those days as familiar with the town of Mansoul, as now is the bird with the boy. For nothing that was in its primitive state was at all amazing to them.

Then they proceeded to the third thing, which was, Whether they had best to show their intentions, or the design of his coming, to Mansoul or no? This also was answered in the negative, because of the weight that was in the former reasons, to wit, for that Mansoul were a strong people, a strong people in a strong town, whose wall and gates were impregnable, (to say nothing of their castle,) nor can they by any means be won but by their own consent. Beside, said Legion, (for he gave answer to this,) a discovery of our intentions may make them send to their King for aid, and if that be done, I know quickly what time of day it will be with us. Therefore let us assault them in all pretended fairness, covering of our intentions with all manner of lies, flatteries, delusive words; feigning of things that never will be, and promising of that to them that they shall never find. This is the way to win Mansoul, and to make them of themselves to open their gates to us; yea, and to desire us too, to come in to them. And the reason why I think that this project will do, is, because the people of Mansoul now are every one simple and innocent; and all honest and true; nor do they as yet know what it is to be assaulted with fraud, guile and hypocrisy. They are strangers to lying and dissembling lips; wherefore we cannot, if thus we be disguised, by them at all be discerned; our lies shall go for true sayings, and our dissimulation for upright dealings.—What we promise them, they will in that believe us, especially if in all our lies and feigned words, we pretend great love to them, and that our design is only their advantage and honor. Now there was not one bit of a reply against this; this went as current down, as doth the water down a steep descent.

Wherefore they go to consider of the last proposal, which was, Whether they had not best to give out orders to some of their company, to shoot some one or more of the principal of the townsmen, if they judge that their cause may be promoted thereby. This was carried in the affirmative. and the man that was designed by this stratagem to be destroyed, was one Mr. Resistance otherwise called Captain Resistance. And a great man in Mansoul this Captain Resistance was; and a man that the giant Diabolus and his band more feared than they feared the whole town of Mansoul besides. Now who should be the actor to do the murder, that was the next; and they appointed one Tisiphane, a fury of the lake, to do it.

They thus having ended their council of war, rose up, and assayed to do as they had determined: they marched towards Mansoul, but all in a manner invisible, save one, only one; nor did he approach the town in his own likeness, but under the shape, and in the body of a dragon. So they drew up and sat down before Eargate, for that was the place of hearing for all without the town, as Eye-gate was the place of perspection. So as I said, he came up with his train to the gate, and laid his ambuscado for Captain Resistance within bow shot of the town. This done, the giant ascended up close to the gate, and called to the town of Mansoul for audience. Nor took he any with him, but one Ill-pause, who was his orator in all difficult matters. Now, as I said, he being come up to the gate, (as the manner of those times was,) sounded his trumpet for audience. At which the chief of the town of Mansoul, such as my Lord Innocent, my Lord Willbewill, my Lord Mayor, Mr. Recorder, and Captain Resistance, came down to the wall to see who was there, and what was the matter. And my Lord Willbewill, when he had looked over, and saw who stood at the gate, demanded what he was, wherefore he was come, and why he roused the town of Mansoul with so unusual a sound?

Diabolus. (Diabolus then, as if he had been a lamb, began his oration, and said,) Gentlemen of the famous town of Mansoul, I am, as you may perceive, no far dweller from you, but near, and one that is bound by the King to do you my homage, and what service I can; wherefore that I may be faithful to myself, and to you, I have somewhat of concern to impart unto you. Wherefore grant me your audience, and hear me patiently. And first, I will assure you, it is not myself, but you; not mine, but your advantage, that I seek by what I now do, as will full well be made manifest by that I have opened my mind unto you. For, gentlemen, I am, to tell you the truth, come to show you how you may obtain great and ample deliverance from a bondage, that, unawares to yourselves, you are captivated and enslaved under. At this the town of Mansoul began to prick up its ears; and what is it, pray, what is it thought they. And he said, I have somewhat to say to you concerning your King, concerning his law, and also touching yourselves.

Touching your King, I know he is great and potent, but yet, all that he hath said to you, is neither true, nor yet for your advantage. 1. It is not true, for that wherewith he hath hitherto awed you, shall not come to pass, nor be fulfilled, though you do the thing that he hath forbidden. But if there was danger, what a slavery it is to live always in fear of the greatest of punishments, for doing so small and trivial a thing as eating of a little fruit is! 2. Touching his laws, this I say further, they are both unreasonable, intricate, and intolerable; unreasonable, as was hinted before, for that the punishment is not proportioned to the offence. There is great difference and disproportion betwixt the life and an apple; yet the one must go for the other by the law of your Shaddai. But it is also intricate, in that he saith, first, you may eat of all; and yet after, forbids the eating of one. And then, in the last place, it must needs be intolerable, forasmuch as that fruit which you are forbidden to eat of, (if you are forbidden any,) is that, and that alone, which is able, by your eating, to minister to you a good as yet unknown by you. This is manifest by the very name of the tree; it is called *the tree of knowledge of good and evil;* and have you that knowledge as yet? No, no, nor can you conceive how good, how pleasant, and how much to be desired to make one wise it is, so long as you stand by your King's commandment. Why should you be holden in ignorence and blindness? Why should you not be enlarged in knowledge and understanding? And now, ah! ye inhabitants of the famous town of Mansoul, to speak more particularly to yourselves, you are not a free people: you are kept both in bondage and slavery, and that by a grievous threat, no reason being annexed, but so I will have it, so it shall be. And is it not grievous to think on, that that very thing that you are forbidden to do, might you but do it, would yield you both wisdom and honor? for then your eyes will be opened, and you shall be as gods. Now since this is thus, quoth he, can you be kept by any prince in more slavery, and in greater bondage than you are under this day? You are made underlings, and are wrapt up in inconveniences, as I have well made appear. For what bondage greater than to be kept in blindness? Will not reason tell you that it is better to have eyes than to be without them, and so to be at liberty to be better than to be shut up in a dark and stinking cave?

And just now, while Diabolus was speaking these words to Mansoul, Tisiphane shot at Captain Resistance, where he stood on the gate, and mortally wounded him in the head, so that he, to the amazement of the townsmen, and the encouragement of Diabolus, fell down quite dead over the wall. Now, when Captain Resistance was dead, (and he was the only man of war in the town,) poor Mansoul was left wholly naked of courage, nor had she now any heart to resist. But this was as the devil would have it. Then he, Mr. Ill-Pause, that Diabolus brought with him, who was his orator, addressed himself to speak to the town of Mansoul; the tenor of whose speech here follows.

Ill-pause. Gentlemen, quoth he, it is my master's happiness, that he hath this day a quiet and teachable auditory, and it is hoped by us, that we shall prevail with you not to cast off good advice; my master has a very great love for you, and although as he very well knows, that he runs the hazard of the anger of King Shaddai, yet love to you will make him do more than that. Nor doth there need that a word more should be spoken to confirm for truth what he hath said; there is not a word but carries in it self-evidence in its bowels; the very name of the tree may put an end to all controversy in this matter. I therefore at this time shall only add this advice to you, under, and by the leave of my lord, (and with that he made Diabolus a very low congee.) Consider his words, look on the tree, and the promising fruit thereof; remember also that yet you know but little, and that this is the way to know more; and if your reasons be not conquered to accept of such a good counsel you are not the men that I took you to be. But when the townsfolk saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eye, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, they did as old Ill-pause advised; they took and did eat thereof. Now, this I should have told you before, that even then, when this Ill-pause was making of his speech to the townsmen, my Lord Innocency, whether by a shot from the camp of the giant, or from a sinking qualm that suddenly took him, or rather by the stinking breath of that treacherous villain old Ill-pause, (for so I am most apt to think,) sunk down in the place where he stood, nor could he be brought to life again. Thus these two brave men died; brave men I call them, for they were the beauty and glory of Mansoul, so long as they lived therein: nor did there now remain any more a noble spirit in Mansoul, they all fell down, and yielded obedience to Diabolus, and became his slaves and vassals as you shall hear.

Now these being dead, what do the rest of the townsfolk, but as men that had found a fool's paradise; they presently, as afore was hinted, fall to prove the truth of the giant's words; and first they did as Ill-pause had taught them; they looked, they

considered, they were taken with the forbidden fruit, they took thereof, and did eat ; and having eaten, they became immediately drunken therewith ; so they opened the gate, both Ear-gate and Eye-gate, and let in Diabolus with all his bands, quite forgetting their good Shaddai, his law, and the judgment that he had annexed with solemn threatning to the breach thereof.

Diabolus having now obtained entrance in at the gates of the town, marches up to the middle thereof, to make his conquest as sure as he could : and finding by this time the affections of the people warmly inclining to him, he, as thinking it was best striking while the iron was hot, made this further deceivable speech unto them, saying, Alas ! my poor Mansoul ! I have done thee indeed this service, as to promote thee to honor ; and to greaten thy liberty ; but, alas ! alas ! poor Mansoul, thou wantest now one to defend thee ; for assure thyself, that when Shaddai shall hear what is done, he will come ; for sorry will he be that thou hast broken his bonds, and cast his cords away from thee. What wilt thou do ? Wilt thou after enlargement, suffer thy privileges to be invaded, and taken away ? or what wilt thou resolve with thyself ? Then they all with one consent said to this bramble, *Do thou reign over us.* So he accepted the motion, and became king of the town of Mansoul. This being done, the next thing was, to give him possession of the castle, and so of the whole strength of the town. Wherefore into the castle he goes ; (it was that which Shaddai built in Mansoul for his own delight and pleasure ;) this now was become a den and hold for the giant Diabolus.

Now, having got possession of this stately palace, or castle, what doth he, but make it a garrison for himself, and strengthens and fortifies it with all sorts of provision against the king Shaddai, or those that should endeavour the regaining of it to him, and his obedience again.

This done, but not thinking himself yet secure enough, in the next place, he bethinks himself of new modelling the town ; and so he does, setting up one, and putting down another, at pleasure. Wherefore my Lord Mayor, whose name was my Lord Understanding, and Mr. Recorder, whose name was Mr. Conscience, those he puts out of place and power.

As for my Lord Mayor, though he was an understanding man, and one too that had complied with the rest of the town of Mansoul, in admitting the giant into the town ; yet Diabolus thought not fit to let him abide in his former lustre and glory, because he was a seeing man. Wherefore he darkened it, not only by taking from him his office and power, but by building of an high and strong tower, just behind the sun's reflections, and the windows of my Lord's palace ; by which means his house and all, and the whole of his habitation, was made as dark as darkness itself ; and thus being alienated from the light, he became as one that was born blind. To this his house my lord was confined, as to a prison, nor might he upon his parole go further than within his own bounds. And now had he an heart to do for Mansoul, what could he do for it, or wherein could he be profitable to her ? So then, so long as Mansoul was under the power and government of Diabolus, (and so long it was under him, as it was obedient to him, which was even until by a war it was rescued out of his hand,) so long my Lord Mayor was rather an impediment in, than an advantage to, the famous town of Mansoul.

As for Mr. Recorder, before the town was taken, he was a man well read in the laws of his King ; and also a man of courage and faithfulness to speak truth at every occasion ; and he had a tongue as bravely hung as he had an head filled with judgment. Now this man Diabolus could by no means abide ; because, though he gave his consent to his coming into the town, yet he could not, by all wiles, trials and devices that he could use, make him wholly his own. True he was much degenerated from his former King, and also much pleased with many of the giant's laws and service. But all this would not do, forasmuch as he was not wholly his. He would now and then think upon Shaddai, and have dread of his law upon him; and then he would speak with a voice as great against Diabolus as when a lion roareth ; yea, and would also, at certain times, when his fits were upon him, (for you must know that sometimes he had terrible fits,) make the whole town of Mansoul shake with his voice. And therefore the new king of Mansoul could not abide him.

Diabolus therefore feared the Recorder more than any that was left alive in the town of Mansoul, because, as I said, his words did shake the whole town ; they were like the rattling thunder, and also like thunderclaps. Since, therefore, the giant, could not make him wholly his own, what doth he do, but studies all that he could to debauch the old gentleman, and by debauchery to stupify his mind, and more harden his heart in ways of vanity. And as he attempted, so he accomplished his design. He debauched the man, and by little and little so drew him into sin and wickedness, that at last he was not only debauched, as at first, and so by consequence defiled, but was almost (at last I say,) past all conscience of sin. And this

was the farthest Diabolus could go.—Wherefore he bethinks him of another project, and that was, to persuade the men of the town that Mr. Recorder was mad, and so not to be regarded. And for this he urged his fits, and said, If he be himself, why doth he not do thus always? But, quoth he, as all mad folks have their fits, and in them their raving language, so hath this old and doating gentleman. Thus by one means or another, he quickly got Mansoul to slight, neglect, and despise whatever Mr. Recorder could say; for, besides what already you have heard, Diabolus had a way to make the old gentleman, when he was merry, unsay and deny what he in his fits had affirmed. And indeed this was the next way to make himself ridiculous, and to cause that no man should regard him. Also now he never spake freely for King Shaddai, but always by force and constraint. Besides, he would at one time be hot against that, at which at another he would hold his peace; so uneven was he now in his doings. Sometimes he would be as if fast asleep, and again sometimes as dead, even then when the whole town of Mansoul was in her career after vanity, and in her dance after the giant's pipe.

Wherefore, sometimes when Mansoul did use to be frighted with the thundering voice of the Recorder that was, and when they did tell Diabolus of it, he would answer, That what the old gentleman said was neither of love to him, nor pity to them, but of a foolish fondness that he had to be prating; and so would hush, still, and put all to quiet again. And that he might leave no argument unurged, that might tend to make them secure, he said, and said it often, O Mansoul! consider, that notwithstanding the old gentleman's rage and the rattle of his high and thundering words, you hear nothing of Shaddai himself; when, liar and deceiver that he was, every outcry of Mr. Recorder against the sin of Mansoul, was the voice of God in him to them. But he goes on, and says, You see that he values not the loss, nor rebellion of the town of Mansoul, nor will he trouble himself with calling of his town to a reckoning for their giving up themselves to me. He knows, that though ye were his, now you are lawfully mine; so leaving us one to another, he now hath shaken his hands of us.

Moreover, O Mansoul! quoth he, consider how I have served you, even to the utmost of my power, and that with the best that I have, could get, or procure for you, in all the world. Besides, I dare say, that the laws and customs that you now are under, and by which you do homage to me, do yield you more solace and content, than did the paradise that at first you possessed. Your liberty also, as yourselves do very well know, has been greatly widened and enlarged by me; whereas I found you a pent-up people. I have not laid any restraint upon you; you have no law, statute, or judgment of mine to fright you; I call none of you to account for your doings, except the madman, you know who I mean: I have granted you to live, each man, like a prince in his own, even with as little control from me, as I myself have from you.

And thus would Diabolus hush up, and quiet the town of Mansoul, when the Recorder that was, did at times molest them; yea, and with such cursed orations as these, would he set the whole town in a rage and fury against the old gentleman; yea, the rascal crew at sometimes would be for destroying of him. They have often wished (in my hearing) that he had lived a thousand miles off from them; his company, his words, yea the sight of him, and especially when they remembered how in old times he did use to threaten and condemn them, (for all he was now so debauched,) did terrify and afflict them sore.

But all wishes were in vain; for I do not know how, unless by the power of Shaddai and his wisdom, he was preserved in being amongst them. Besides his house was as strong as a castle, and stood hard to a strong hold of the town. Moreover, if at any time any of the crew or rabble attempted to make him away, he could pull up the sluices, and let in such floods as would drown all round about him.

But to leave Mr. Recorder, and to come to my Lord Willbewill, another of the gentry of the famous town of Mansoul. This Willbewill was as high born as any man in Mansoul, and was as much, if not more, a freeholder, than many of them were. Besides, if I remember my tale aright, he had some privilege peculiar to himself in the famous town of Mansoul. Now, together with these, he was a man of great strength, resolution, and courage, nor in his occasion could any turn him away. But I say, whether he was proud of his estate, privleges, strength, or what, (but sure it was through pride of some thing,) he scorns now to be a slave in Mansoul and therefore resolves to bear office under Diabolus, that he might (such an one as he was) be a petty ruler and governor in Mansoul. And (head-strong man that he was) thus he began betimes; for this man, when Diabolus did make his oration at Ear-gate, was one of the first that was for consenting to his words, and for accepting of his counsel as wholesome, and that was for the opening of the gate, and for letting him into the town. Wherefore Diabolus had a kindness for him; and therefore he designed for him

a place; and perceiving the valour and stoutness of the man, he coveted to have him for one of the great ones, to act and do in matters of the highest concern.

So he sent for him, and talked with him of that secret matter that lay in his breast. But there needed not much persuasion in the case; for as at first he was willing that Diabolus should be let into the town, so now he was as willing to serve him there. When the tyrant, therefore, perceived the willingness of my Lord to serve him, and that his mind stood bending that way, he forthwith made him the captain of the castle, governor of the wall, and keeper of the gates of Mansoul. Yea, there was a clause in his commission, that nothing without him should be done in all the town of Mansoul. So that now, next to Diabolus himself, who but my Lord Willbewill in all the town of Mansoul? nor could anything now be done but at his will and pleasure, throughout the town of Mansoul. He had also one Mr. Mind for his clerk, a man to speak on every way like his master; for he and his lord were in principle one, and in practice not far asunder. And now was Mansoul brought under to purpose, and made to fulfil the lusts of the will and of the mind.

But it will not be out of my thoughts what a desperate one this Willbewill was, when power was put into his hand. First, he flatly denied that he owed any suit or service to his former prince and liege lord. This done, in the next place he took an oath, and swore fidelity to his great master Diabolus; and then being seated and settled in his places, offices, advancements and prefferments, oh! you cannot think, unless you had seen it, the strange work that this workman made in the town of Mansoul.

First, he maligned Mr. Recorder to death; he would neither endure to see him, nor to hear the words of his mouth; he would shut his eyes when he saw him, and stop his ears when he heard him speak; also he could not endure that so much as a fragment of the law of Shaddai should be any where seen in the town. For example, his clerk, Mr. Mind, had some old rent and torn parchments of the law of good Shaddai in his house; but when Willbewill saw them, he cast them behind his back. True, Mr. Recorder had some of the laws in his study, but my Lord could by no means come at them. He also thought, and said, that the windows of my old Lord Mayor's house were always too light for the profit of the town of Mansoul. The light of a candle he could not endure. Now nothing at all pleased Willbewill, but what pleased Diabolus his lord.

There was none like him to trumpet about the streets the brave nature, the wise conduct, and great glory of the king Diabolus. He would range and rove throughout the streets of Mansoul to cry up his illustrious lord, and would make himself even as an abject among the base and rascal crew, to cry up his valiant prince. And I say when and wheresoever he found these vassals, he would even make himself as one of them. In all ill courses he would act without bidding, and do mischief without commandment.

The Lord Willbewill had also a deputy under him, and his name was Mr. Affection; one that was also greatly debauched in his principles, and answerable thereto in his life; he was wholly given to the flesh, and therefore they called him Vile-affection. Now there was he and one Carnal Lust, the daughter of Mr. Mind (like to like quoth the devil to the collier,) that fell in love, and made a match, and were married: and as I take it, they had several children, as Impudent, Black-mouth, and Hate-reproof; these three were black boys, and besides these, they had three daughters, as Scorn-truth, Slight-God, and the name of the youngest was Town, and also begot and yielded Bad-revenge; these were all married, and the brats were too many to be here inserted. But to pass by this.

When the giant had thus ingarrisoned himself in the town of Mansoul, and had put down and set up whom he thought good, he betakes himself to defacing. Now there was in the market-place in Mansoul, and also upon the gates of the castle, an image of the blessed King Shaddai; this image was exactly engraven, (and it was engraven in gold,) that it did the most resemble Shaddai himself of any thing that then was extant in the world. This he basely commanded to be defaced, and it was as basely done by the hand of Mr. No-truth.—Now you must know, that as Diabolus had commanded, and that by the hand of Mr. No-truth, the image of Shaddai was defaced. He likewise gave order, that the same Mr. No-truth should set up in its stead the horrid and formidable image of Diabolus; to the great contempt of the former King, and the debasing of his town of Mansoul.

Moreover, Diabolus made havoc of all remains of the laws and statutes of Shaddai, that could be found in the town of Mansoul; to wit, such as contained either the doctrines of morals, with all civil and natural documents. Also relative severities he sought to extinguish. To be short, there was nothing of the remains of good in Mansoul which he and Willbewill sought not to destroy; for their design was to turn Mansoul into a brute, and to make it like

to the sensual sow, by the hand of Mr. No-truth.

When he had destroyed what law and good orders he could, then further to effect his design, namely to alienate Mansoul from Shaddai her King, he commands, and they set up his own vain edicts, statutes, and commandments in all places of resort or concourse in Mansoul, to wit, such as gave liberty to the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life, which are not of Shaddai, but of the world. He encouraged, countenanced, and promoted lasciviousness, and all ungodliness there. Yea, much more did Diabolus to encourage wickedness in the town of Mansoul; he promised them peace, content, joy and bliss in doing his commands, and that they shoud never be called to an account for their not doing the contrary. And let this serve to give a taste to them that love to hear tell of what is done beyond their knowledge, afar off in other countries.

Now Mansoul being wholly at his beck, and brought wholly to his bow, nothing was heard or seen therein but that which tended to set him up.

But now, he having disabled the Lord Mayor, and Mr. Recorder, from bearing of office in Mansoul, and seeing that the town before he came to it was the most ancient of corporations in the world; and fearing, if he did not maintain greatness, they at any time should object that he had done them an injury; therefore, I say, (that they might see that he did not intend to lessen their grandeur, or take from them any of their advantageous things,) he did choose for them a Lord Mayor and Recorder himself; and such as contented them at the heart, and such also as pleased him wondrous well.

The name of the Mayor that was of Diabolus's making, was the Lord Lustings, a man that had neither eyes nor ears; all that he did, whether as a man or an officer, he did it naturally, as doth the beast. And that which made him yet the more ignoble, though not to Mansoul, yet to them that beheld and were grieved for its ruins, was, that he never could favor good, but evil.

The Recorder was one whose name was Forget-good, and a very sorry fellow he was. He could remember nothing but mischief, and to do it with delight. He was naturally prone to do things that were hurtful, even hurtful to the town of Mansoul, and to all the dwellers there. These too, therefore, by their power and practice, examples and smiles upon evil, did much more grammar and settle the common people in hurtful ways; for who doth not perceive, but when those that sit aloft are vile and corrupt themselves they corrupt the whole region and country where they are.

Besides these, Diabolus made several burgesses and alderman in Mansoul, such as out of whom the town, when it needed, might choose them officers, governors, and magistrates, and these are the names of the chief of them: Mr. Incredulity, Mr. Haughty, Mr. Swearing, Mr. Whoring, Mr. Hard-heart, Mr. Pitiless, Mr. Fury, Mr. No-truth, Mr. Stand-to-lies, Mr. False-peace, Mr. Drunkenness, Mr. Cheating, Mr. Atheism, thirteen in all. Mr. Incredulity is the eldest, and Mr. Atheism the youngest of the company.

There was also an election of common councilmen and others, as bailiffs, serjeants, constables and others; but all of them, like to those afore-named, being either fathers, brothers, cousins, or nephews, to them, whose names for brevity's sake, I omit to mention.

When the giant had thus far proceeded in his work, in the next place he betook him to build some strong holds in the town. And he built three that seemed to be impregnable. The first he called the hold of Defiance, because it was made to command the whole town, and to keep it from the knowledge of its ancient king. The second he called Midnight-hold, because it was built on purpose to keep Mansoul from the true knowledge of itself. The third was called Sweet-sin-hold, because by that he fortified Mansoul against all desires of good. The first of these holds stood close by Eye-gate, that as much as might be, light might be darkened there. The second was built hard by the old castle, to the end that it might be made more blind, if possible. And the third stood in the market place.

He that Diabolus made governor over the first of these was one Spite-God, a most blasphemous wretch. He came with the whole rabble of them that came against Mansoul at first, and was himself one of themselves. He that was made the governor of Midnight-hold, was one Love-no-light; he was also of them that came first against the town. And he that was made the governor of the hold called Sweet-sin-hold, was one whose name was Love-flesh; he was also a very lewd fellow, but not of that country where the others are bound. This fellow could find more sweetness when he stood sucking of a lust, than he did in all the paradise of God.

And now Diabolus thougt himself safe; he had taken Mansoul; he had ingarrisoned himself therein; he had put down the old officers, and had set up new ones; he had defaced the image of Shaddai, and set up his own; he had spoiled the old law books, and promoted his own vain lies; he had made him new magistrates, and set up new aldermen; he had built him new holds, and had manned them for himself.

And all this he did to make himself secure, in case the good Shaddai, or his Son, should come and make an incursion upon him.

Now you may well think, that long before this time, word, by some or other, could not but be carried to the good King Shaddai, how his Mansoul, in the continent of Universe was lost; and that the runagate giant Diabolus, once one of his Majesty's servants, had, in rebellion, against the King, made sure thereof for himself; yea, tidings were carried, and brought to the King thereof, and that to a very circumstance.

As first, how Diabolus came upon Mansoul, (they being a simple people and innocent,) with craft, subtlety, lies, and guile. *Item*, That he had treacherously slain the right noble and valiant captain, their captain Resistance, as he stood upon the gate with the rest of the townsmen. *Item*, How my brave Lord Innocent fell down dead, (with grief some say, or with being poisoned with the stinking breath of one Ill-pause, as say others,) at the hearing of his just Lord, and rightful Prince Shaddai abused by the mouth of so filthy a Diabolian as that varlet Ill-pause was. The messenger further told, That after this Ill-pause had made a short oration to the townsmen in behalf of Diabolus his master, the simple town believing that what was said was true, with one consent did open Eargate, the chief gate of the corporation, and did let him, with his crew, into a possession of the famous town of Mansoul. He further showed how Diabolous had served the Lord Mayor and Mr. Recorder, to wit, that he had put them from all place of power and trust. *Item*, He showed also that my Lord Willbewill was turned a very rebel and runagate, and that so was one Mr. Mind, his clerk, and that they two did range and revel it all the town over, and teach the wicked ones their way. He said, moreover, that this Willbewill was put into great trust, and particularly that Diabolus had put into Willbewill's hand all the strong places in Mansoul; and that Mr. affection was made my Lord Willbewill's deputy in his most rebellious affairs. Yea, said the messenger, this monster, Lord Willbewill, has openly disavowed his King Shaddai, and hath horribly given his faith, and plighted his troth to Diabolus.

Also, said the messenger, besides all this, the new king, or rather rebellious tyrant, over the once famous, but now perishing town of Mansoul, has set up a Lord Mayor and a Recorder of his own. For Mayor he has set up one Mr. Lustings, and for Recorder, Mr. Forget-good, two of the vilest of all the town of Mansoul.—This faithful messenger also proceeded, and told what sort of new burgesses Diabolus had made; also that he had built several strong forts, towers, and strong holds in Mansoul. He told too, the which I had almost forgot, how Diabolus had put the town of Mansoul into arms, the better to capacitate them on his behalf to make resistance against Shaddai their King, should he come to reduce them to their former obedience.

Now this tidings-teller did not deliver his relation of things in private, but in open court, the King and his Son, high lords, chief captains, and nobles, being all there present to hear. But by that they had heard the whole of the story, it would have amazed one to have seen, had he been there to behold it, what sorrow and grief and compunction of spirit there was among all sorts to think that famous Mansoul was now taken; only the King and his Son foresaw all this long before, yea, and sufficiently provided for the relief of Mansoul, though they told not every body thereof: yet, because they also would have a share in condoling of the misery of Mansoul, therefore they also did, and that at the rate of the highest degree, bewail the losing of Mansoul. The King said plainly, that it grieved him at the heart; and you may be sure that his Son was not a whit behind him. Thus gave they conviction to all about them, that they had love and compassion for the famous town of Mansoul. Well, when the King and his Son had retired into the privy chamber, there they again consulted about what they had designed before, to wit, That as Mansoul should in time be suffered to be lost, so as certainly it should be recovered again; recovered, I say, in such a way as that both the King and his Son should get themselves the fame and glory thereby.—Wherefore after the Son of Shaddai, (a sweet and comely person, and one that had always great affection for those that were in affliction, but one that had mortal enmity in his heart against Diabolus, because he was designed for it, and because he sought his crown and dignity;) the Son of Shaddai, I say, having stricken hands with his father, and promised that he would be his servant to recover his Mansoul again, stood by his resolution, nor would he repent of the same. The purport of which agreement was this, to wit, That at a certain time prefixed by both, the King's Son should take a journey into the country of Universe; and there, in a way of justice and equity, by making of amends for the follies of Mansoul, he should lay a foundation of her perfect deliverance from Diabolus, and from his tyranny.

Moreover Emmanuel resolved to make, at a time convanient, a war upon the giant Diabolus, even while he was possessed of the town of Mansoul; and that he would fairly, by strength of hand, drive him out of

his hold, his nest, and take it to himself, to be his habitation.

This now being resolved upon, order was given to the Lord Chief Secretary to draw up a fair record of what was determined, and to cause that it should be published in all the corners of the kingdom of Universe. A short breviat of the contents thereof, you may, if you please, take here as follows:

"Let all men know who are concerned, that the Son of Shaddai, the great King, is engaged by covenant to his Father, to bring his Mansoul to him again; yea, and to put Mansoul too, through the power of his matchless love, into a far better, and more happy condition than it was in before it was taken by Diabolus."

These papers, therefore, were published in several places to the no little molestation of the tyrant Diabolus; for now, thought he, I shall be molested, and my habitation will be taken from me.

But when this matter, I mean this purpose of the King and his Son, did at first take air at court, who can tell how the high lords, chief captains, and noble princes that were there, were taken with the business. First, they whispered it one to another, and after that it began to ring throughout the King's palace, all wondering at the glorious design that between the King and his Son was on foot for the miserable town of Mansoul. Yea, the courtiers could scarce do any thing, either for the King or kingdom, but they would mix with the doing thereof, a noise of the love of the King and his Son, that they had for the town of Mansoul.

Nor could these lords, high captains, and princes be content to keep this his news at court: yea, before the records thereof were perfected, themselves came down and told in the Universe. At last it came to the ears, as I said, of Diabolus, to his no little discontent. For you must think it would perplex him to hear of such a design against him. Well, but after a few casts in his mind, he concluded on these four things:

First, That this good news, this good tidings, if possible, should be kept from the ears of the town of Mansoul; for, said he, if they shall once come to the knowledge, that Shaddai their former King, and Emmanuel his Son, are contriving of good for the town of Mansoul, what can be expected by me, but that Mansoul will make a revolt from under my hand and government and return again to him.

Now, to accomplish this his design, he renews his flattery with the Lord Willbewill, and also gives him strict charge and command, that he should keep watch by day and by night, at all the gates of the town, especially Ear-gate and Eye-gate; for I hear of a design, quoth he; a design to make us all traitors, and that Mansoul will be reduced to its first bondage again. I hope they are but flying stories, quoth he; however, let no such news by any means be let into Mansoul, lest the people be dejected thereat. I think, my lord, it can be no welcome news to you, I am sure it is none to me. And I think that at this time it should be all our wisdom and care to nip the head of all such rumors as shall tend to trouble our people; wherefore, I desire, my lord, that you will in this matter, do as I say; let there be strong guards daily kept at every gate of the town. Stop also and examine from whence such come, that you perceive do from far come hither to trade; nor let them by any means be admitted into Mansoul, unless you shall plainly perceive that they are favorers of our excellent government. I command, moreover, said Diabolus, that there be spies continually walking up and down the town of Mansoul, and let them have power to suppress and destroy any that they shall perceive to be plotting against us; or that shall prate of what by Shaddai and Emmanuel is intended.

This therefore was accordingly done; my Lord Willbewill hearkened to his lord and master, went willingly after the commandment, and with all the diligence he could, kept any that would from going out abroad, or that sought to bring these tidings to Mansoul, from coming into the town.

Secondly, This done, in the next place, Diabolus, that he might make Mansoul as sure as he could, frames and imposes a new oath and horrible covenant, upon the town's-folk:

To wit, "That they should never desert him nor his government, nor yet betray him, nor seek to alter his laws; but that they should own, confess, stand by, and acknowledge him for their rightful king, in defiance to any that do, or hereafter shall, by any pretence, law, or title whatever, lay claim to the town of Mansoul." Thinking, belike, that Shaddai had not power to absolve them from this covenant with death, and agreement with hell. Nor did the silly Mansoul stick or boggle at all at this most monstrous engagement; but, as if it had been a sprat in the mouth of a whale, they swallowed it without any chewing. Were they troubled at it? nay, they rather bragged and boasted of their so brave fidelity to the tyrant, their pretended king, swearing that they would never be changelings, nor forsake their old lord for a new.

Thus did Diabolus tie poor Mansoul fast; but jealousy, that never thinks itself strong enough, put him in the next place upon another exploit, which was yet more, if possible, to debauch this town of Mansoul.

Wherefore he caused, by the hand of one Mr. Filth, an odious, nasty, lascivious piece of beastliness to be drawn up in writing, and to be set upon the castle gates; whereby he granted, and gave license to all his true and trusty sons in Mansoul, to do whatsoever their lustful appetites prompted them to, and that no man was to let, hinder, or control them, upon pain of incurring the displeasure of their prince.

Now this he did for these reasons:

1. That the town of Mansoul might be yet made weaker and weaker, and so more unable, should tidings come, that their redemption was designed, to believe, hope, or consent to the truth thereof. For reason says, The bigger the sinner, the less grounds of hope of mercy.

2. The second reason was, If perhaps Emmanuel, the Son of Shaddai their King, by seeing the horrible and profane doings of the town of Mansoul, might repent, though entered into a covenant of redeeming them, of pursuing that covenant of their redemption; for he knew that Shaddai was holy, and that his Son Emmanuel was holy; yea, he knew it by woful experience; for, for the iniquity and sin of Diabolus, was he cast from the highest orbs. Wherefore, what more rational than for him to conclude, that thus for sin it might fare with Mansoul? But fearing also lest this knot should break, he bethinks himself of another, to wit:

3. To endeavor to possess all hearts in the town of Mansoul, that Shaddai was raising of an army, to come to overthrow and utterly to destroy this town of Mansoul, (and this he did to fore-stall any tidings that might come to their ears, of their deliverance;) for thought he, if I first bruit this, the tidings that shall come after will all be swallowed up of this; for what else will Mansoul say, when they shall hear that they must be delivered, but that the true meaning is, Shaddai intends to destroy them? Wherefore he summons the whole town into the market-place, and there with deceitful tongue, thus addresses himself unto them:

Gentlemen, and my very good friends, you are all, as you know, my legal subjects, and men of the famous town of mansoul; you know how, from the first day that I have been with you until now, I have behaved myself among you, and what liberty and great privileges you enjoyed under my government: I hope to your honor and mine, and also to your content and delight. Now, my famous Mansoul, a noise of trouble there is abroad, of trouble to the town of Mansoul; sorry am I thereof for your sakes. For I have received but now by the post from my Lord Lucifer, (and he useth to have good intelligence,) That your old King Shaddai is raising of an army to come agaigst you, to destroy you root and branch; and this, O Mansoul, is now the cause that at this time I have called you together, namely, to advise what in this juncture, is best to be done: for my part, I am but one, and can with ease shift for myself, did I list to seek mine own ease, and to leave my Mansoul in all the danger; but my heart is so firmly united to you, and so unwilling am I to leave you, that I am willing to stand and fall with you, to the utmost hazard that shall befall me. What say you, O my Mansoul? Will you now desert your old friend, or do you think of standing by me? Then, as one man, with one mouth, tney cried out together, Let him die the death that will not.

Then said Diabolus again, It is in vain for us to hope for quarter, for this King knows not how to show it. True, perhaps he, at his first setting down before us, will talk of, and pretend to mercy, that thereby, with the more ease and less trouble, he may again make himself the master of Mansoul. Whatever, therefore, he shall say, believe not one syllable or tittle of it, for all such language is but to overcome us, and to make us while we wallow in our blood, the trophies of his merciless victory. My mind is, therefore, that we resolve to the last man, to resist him, and not to believe him upon any terms; for in at that door will come our danger. But shall we be flattered out of our lives? I hope you know more of the rudiments of politics than to suffer yourselves so pitifully to be served.

But suppose he should, if he gets us to yield, save some of our lives, or the lives of some of them that are underlings in Mansoul, what help will that be to you who are the chief of the town; especially to you whom I have set up, and whose greatness has been procured by you through your faithful sticking to me? And suppose again, that he should give quarter to every one of you, be sure he will bring you into that bondage under which you were captivated before, or a worse; and then what good will your lives do you? Shall you with him live in pleasure as you do now? No, no; you must be bound by laws that will pinch you, and be made to do that which at present is hateful to you; I am for you, if you are for me; and it is better to die valiantly, than to live like pitiful slaves. But I say, the life of a slave will be counted a life too good for Mansoul, now; blood, blood, nothing but blood is in every blast of Shaddai's trumpet against poor Mansoul now. Pray be concerned; I hear he is coming up, and stand to your arms, that now while you have any leisure, I may learn you some feats of war. Armor for you I have, and by me it is; yea, and it is

sufficient for Mansoul from top to toe; nor can you be hurt by what his force can do, if you shall keep it well girt and fastened about you: come, therefore, to my castle, and welcome, and harness yourselves for the war. There is helmet, breast-plate, sword and shield, and what not, that will make you fight like men.

1. My helmet, otherwise called an *head-piece*, is hope of doing well at last, what lives soever you live: this is that which they had, who said, that they should have peace, though they walked in the wickedness of their heart, to add drunkenness to thirst. A piece of approved armor this is and whoever has it, and can hold it, so long, no arrow, dart, sword, or shield, can hurt him; this therefore keep on, and thou wilt keep off many a blow, my Mansoul.

2. My breastplate is a breastplate of iron; I had it forged in mine own country, and all my soldiers are armed therewith; in plain language, it is an hard heart, an heart as hard as iron, and as much past feeling as a stone, the which if you get and keep, neither mercy shall win you, nor judgment fright you. This, therefore, is a piece of armour most necessary for all to put on that hate Shaddai, and that would fight against him under my banner.

3. My sword is a tongue that is set on fire of hell, and that can bend itself to speak evil of Shaddai, his son, his ways, and people. Use this, it has been tried a thousand times twice told; whoever hath it keeps it, and makes that use of it as I would have him, can never be conquered by mine enemy.

4. My shield is unbelief, or calling into question the truth of the word, or all the sayings that speak of the judgment that Shaddai has appointed for wicked men, use this shield; many attempts he has made upon it, and sometimes, it is true, it has been bruised; but they that have writ of the wars of Emmanuel against my servants, have testified that he could do no migty work there, because of their unbelief: now, to handle this weapon of mine aright, it is not to believe things because they are true, of what sort, or by whomsoever asserted; if he speaks of judgment, care not for it; if he speaks of mercy, care not for it; if he promises, if he swears, that he would do to Mansoul, if it turns, no hurt, but good; regard not what is said, question the truth of all; for this is to wield the shield of unbelief aright, and as my servants ought and do; and he that doth otherwise, loves me not, nor do I count him but an enemy to me.

5. Another part, or piece, said Diabolus, of mine excellent armor, is a dumb and prayerless spirit, a spirit that scorns to cry for mercy. Wherefore, be you, my Mansoul, sure that you make use of this. What! cry for quarter! never do that, if you would be mine. I know that you are stout men, and am sure that I have clad you with that which is armor of proof; wherefore to cry to Shaddai for mercy, let that be far from you. Besides all this, I have a maul, firebrands, arrows, and death, all good hand weapons, and such as will do execution.

After he had thus furnished his men with armor and arms, he addressed himself to them in such like words as these: Remember, quoth he, that I am your rightful king, and that you have taken an oath, and entered into covenant to be true to me and my cause. I say, remember this, and show yourselves stout and valient men of Mansoul. Remember, also, the kindness which I have always showed to you, and that without your petition. I have granted to you external things; wherefore the privileges, grants, immunities, profits, and honors wherewith I endowed you, do call for at your hands returns of loyalty, my lion-like men of Mansoul; and when so fit a time to show it, as when another shall seek to take my dominion over you into their own hands? One word more, and I have done; can we but stand and overcome this one shock or brunt, I doubt not but in little time all the world will be ours; and when that day comes, my true hearts, I will make you kings, princes, and cabtains; and what brave days shall we have then!

Diabolus having thus armed and forearmed his servants and vassals in Mansoul, against their good and lawful King, Shaddai, in the next place he doubleth his guards at the gates of the town, and he takes himself to the castle, which was his strong hold; his vassals, also, to show their wills, and suppose (but ignoble) gallantry, exercise themselves in their arms every day, and teach one another feats of war; they also defied their enemies and sang up the praises of their tyrant; they threatened also what men they would be, if ever things should rise so high as a war between Shaddai and their king.

Now all this time the good King, the King Shaddai, was preparing to send an army to recover the town of Mansoul again from under the tyrany of their pretended king Diabolus: but he thought good at the first, not to send them by the hand and conduct of brave Emmanuel his Son, but under the hand of some of his servants to see first by them the temper of Mansoul, and whether by them they would be won to the obedience of their King. The army consisted of above forty thousand, all true men; for they came from the King's own court, and were those of his own choosing.

They came to Mansoul under the con-

duct of four stout generals, each man being a captain of ten thousand men, and these were their names and their signs: the name of the first was Boanerges; the name of the second was Captain Conviction; the name of the third was Captain Judgment; and the name of the fourth was Captain Execution. These were the Captains that Shaddai sent to regain Mansoul.

These four captains, as was said, the King thought fit, in the first place, to send to Mansoul, to maks an attempt upon it: for indeed, generally in all his wars, he did use to send these four captains in the van; for they were very stout and rough-hewn men, men that were fit to break the ice, and to make their way by dint of sword; and their men were like themselves.

To each of these captains the King gave a banner that it might be displayed, because of the goodness of his cause, and because of the right that he had to Mansoul.

First, to Captain Boanerges, for he was the chief: to him, I say, was given ten thousand men. His ensign was Mr. Thunder: he bare the black colours, and his escutcheon was three burning thunderbolts.

The second captain was Captain Conviction; to him was also given ten thousand men. His ensign's name was Mr. Sorrow: he did bear the pale colours, and his escutcheon was the book of the law wide open, from whence issued a flame of fire.

The third captain was Captain Judgment; to him was given ten thousand men. His ensign's name was Mr. Terror; he bare the red colours, and his escutcheon was a burning, fiery furnace.

The fourth captain was Captain Execution: to him was given ten thousand men. His Ensign was one Mr. Justice; he also bare the red colours, and his escutcheon was a fruitless tree, with an axe lying at the root thereof.

These four captains, as I said, had every one of them under his command ten thousand men, all of good fidelity to the King, and stout at their military actions.

Well, the captains and their forces, their men and under officers, being had upon a day by Shaddai into the field, and there called all over by their names, were then and there put into such harness as became their degree, and that service that now they were going about for their King.

Now, when the king had mustered his forces, (for it is he that mustereth the host to the battle,) he gave unto the captains their several commissions, with charge and commandment, in the audience of all the soldiers, that they should take heed faithfully and courageously to do and execute the same. Their commissions were, for the substance of them, the same in form; though as to name, title, place, and degree of the captains, there might be some, but very small, variation. And here let me give you an account of the matter and sum contained in their commission.

A commission from the great Shaddai, King of Mansoul, to his trusty and noble Captain, the Captain Boanerges, for his making war upon the town of Mansoul.

O THOU Boanerges, one of my stout and thundering Captains over one ten thousand of my valiant and faithful servants, go thou in my name with this thy force to the miserable town of Mansoul; and when thou comest thither, offer them first conditions of peace; and command them, that, casting off the yoke and tyranny of the wicked Diabolus, they now turn to me their rightful Prince and Lord. Command them also that they cleanse themselves from all that is his in the town of Mansoul; and look to thyself that thou hast good satisfaction touching the truth of their obedience. Thus when thou hast commanded them, if they in truth submit thereto, then do thou to the uttermost of thy power what in thee lies, to set for me a garrison in the famous town of Mansoul. Nor do thou hurt the least native that moveth or breatheth therein, if they will submit themselves to me, but treat thou such as if they were thy friend or brother; for all such I love; and they shall be dear unto me, and tell them, that I will take a time to come unto them, and to let them know that I am merciful.

But if they shall, notwithstanding thy summons, and the producing of thy authority, resist, stand out against thee, and rebel, then do I command thee to make use of all thy cunning, power, might, and force, to bring them under by strength of hand. Farewell.

Thus you see the sum of their commissions; for, as I said before, the substance of them, they were the same that the rest of the noble captains had.

Wherefore they having received, each commander his authority, at the hand of their King, the day being appointed, and the place of their rendezvous prefixed, each commander appeared in such gallantry as became his cause and calling. So after a new entertainment from Shaddai, with flying colours, they set forward to march towards the famous town of Mansoul: Captain Boanerges led the van; Captain Conviction and Captain Judgment made up the main body; and Captain Execution brought up the rear. They then, having a great way to go, (for the town of Mansoul was far off from the court of Shaddai,) marched through the regions and countries

of many people, not hurting or abusing any, but blessing wherever they came. They also lived upon the King's cost all the way they went.

Having travelled thus for many days, at last they came within sight of Mansoul; the which when they saw, the captains could for their hearts do no less than for awhile bewail the condition of the town; for they quickly saw how that it was prostrate at the feet of Diabolus, and to his ways and designs.

Well, to be short, the captains came up before the town, marched up to Ear-gate, and sat down there; for that was the place of hearing. So when they had pitched their tents, and entrenched themselves, they addressed themselves to make their assault.

Now the townsfolk at first beholding so gallant a company, so bravely accoutred, and so excellently disciplined, having on their glittering armor, and displaying of their flying colors, could not but come out of their houses and gaze. But the cunnig fox Diabolus, fearing that the people after this sight, should, on a sudden summons, open the gates to the captains, came down with all haste from the castle, and made them retire into, the body of the town; who when he had them there, made this lying and deceivable speech unto them:

"Gentlemen, quoth he, although you are my trusty and well beloved friends, yet I cannot, but a little chide you for your late uncircumspect action, in going out to gaze on that great and mighty force, that but yesterday sat down before, and have now entrenched themselves, in order to the maintaining of a siege against the famous town of Mansoul. Do you know who they are, whence they come, and what is their purpose in setting down before the town of Mansoul? They are they of whom I have told you long ago, that they would come to destroy this town, and against whom I have been at the cost to arm you cap-a-pie for your body, besides great fortifications for your mind. Wherefore then did you not rather, even at the first appearence of them, cry out, fire the beacons, and give the whole town an alarm concerning them, that we might all have been in a posture of defence, and been ready to receive them with the highest acts of defiance; then had you showed yourselves men to my liking, wheras by what you have done, you have made me half afraid, I say, half afraid, that when they and we shall come to push a pike, I shall find you want courage to stand it out any longer. Wherefore have I commanded a watch, and that you should double your guards at the gates? Wherefore have I endeavoured to make you as hard as iron, and your hearts as a piece of the nether millstone? Was it, think you, that you might show yourselves women, and that you might go out like a company of innocents, to gaze on your mortal foes? Fy, fy, put yourselves into a posture of defence, beat up the drum, gather together in warlike manner, that our foes may know that, before they shall conquer this corporation, there are valiant men in the town of Mansoul.

I will leave off now to chide, and will not further rebuke you; but I charge you that henceforward you let me see no more such actions. Let not henceforward a man of you, without order first obtained from me, so much as show his head over the wall of the town of Mansoul. You have now heard me, do as I have commanded, and you shall cause me that I dwell securely with you, and that I take care as for myself, so for your safety and honor also. Farewell.

Now were the townsmen strangely altered; they were as men stricken with a panic fear; they ran to and fro through the streets of the town of Mansonl, crying out, Help, help! The men that turn the world upside-down are come hither also. Nor could any of them be quiet after, but still as men bereft of wit, they cried out, The destroyers of our peace and people are come. This went down with Diabolus. Ah! quoth he to himself, This I like well; now it is as I would have it; now you show your obedience to your prince; hold you but here, and then let them take the town if they can.

Well, before the King's forces had set before Mansoul three days, Captain Boanerges commanded his trumpeter to go down to Ear-gate, and there, in the name of the great Shaddai, to summon Mansoul to give audience to the message that he in his master's name was to them commanded to deliver. So the trumpeter, whose name was Take-heed-what-you-hear, went up as he was commanded, to Ear-gate, and there sounded his trumpet for a hearing; but there was none that appeared that gave answer or regard; for so had Diabolus commanded. So the trumpeter returned to his captain, and told him what he had done, and also how he had sped; whereat the captain was grieved, but bid the trumpeter go to his tent.

Again Captain Boanerges sendeth his trumpeter to Ear-gate, to sound as before for an hearing. But they again kept close, came not out, nor would they give him an answer; so observant were they of the command of Diabolus their King.

Then the captains, and other field officers, called a council of war, to considder what further was to be done for the gaining

of the town of Mansoul; and after some close and thorough debate upon the contents of their commissions, they concluded yet to give to the town, by the hand of the forenamed trumpeter, another summons to hear; but if that should be refused, said they, and that the town shall stand it out still, they then determined, and bid the trumpeter tell them so, that they would endeavour, by what means they could, to compel them by force to the obedience of their King. So Captain Boanerges commanded his trumpeter to go up to Ear-gate again, and in the name of the great King Shaddai to give it a very loud summons, to come down without delay to Ear-gate, there to give audience to the King's most noble captains. So the trumpeter went and did as he was commanded. He went up to Ear-gate, and sounded his trumpet, and gave a third summons to Mansoul. He said, moreover, that if this they should still refuse to do, the captains of his Prince would with might come down upon them, and endeavour to reduce them to their obedience by force.

Then stood up my Lord Willbewill, who was the governor of the town, (this Willbewill was that apostate of whom mention was made before,) and the keeper of the gates of Mansoul. He therefore with big and ruffling words, demanded of the trumpeter who he was, whence he came, and what was the cause of his making so hideous a noise at the gate, and speaking such insufferable words against the town of Mansoul.

The trumpeter answered, "I am servant to the most noble captain, Captain Boanerges, general of the forces of the great King Shaddai, against whom, both thyself, with the whole town of Mansoul, have rebelled, and lifted up the heel; and my master, the captain, hath a special message to this town, and to thee, as a member thereof; the which, if you of Mansoul will peaceably hear, so; and if not, you must take what follows."

Then said the Lord Willbewill, "I will carry thy words to my lord, and will know what he will say."

But the trumpeter soon replied, saying, "Our message is not to the giant Diabolus, but to the miserable town of Mansoul. Nor shall we at all regard what answer by him is made; nor yet by any for him. We are sent to this town to recover it from under his cruel tyranny, and to persuade it to submit, as in former times it did, to the most excellent King Shaddai."

Then said the Lord Willbewill, "I will do your errand to the town."

The trumpeter then replied, "Sir, do not deceive us, lest in so doing, you deceive yourselves much more." He added, moreover, "For we are resolved, if in peaceable manner you do not submit yourselves, then to make a war upon you, and to bring you under by force. And of the truth of what I now say, this shall be a sign unto you; you shall see the black flag, with its hot burning thunderbolts, set upon the mount to-morrow, as a token of defiance against your prince, and of our resolutions to reduce you to your Lord and rightful King.

So the said Lord Willbewill returned from off the wall, and the trumpeter came into the camp. When the trumpeter was come into the camp, the captains and officers of the mighty King Shaddai came together to know if he had obtained a hearing, and what was the effect of his errand. So the trumpeter told, saying, "When I had sounded my trumpet, and had called aloud to the town for a hearing, my Lord Willbewill, the governor of the town, and he that hath charge of the gates, came up, when he heard me sound, and looking over the wall, he asked me what I was whence I came, and what was the cause of my making this noise? So I told him my errand, and by whose authority I brought it. Then said he, I will tell it to the governor, and to Mansoul. And then I returned to my Lords."

Then said the brave Boanerges, "Let us for awhile lie still within our trenches, and see what these rebels will do. Now when the time drew nigh, that audience by Mansoul was to be given to the brave Boanerges and his companions, it was commanded that all the men of war throughout the whole camp of Shaddai should, as one man, stand to their arms, and make themselves ready, if the town of Mansoul shall hear, to receive it forthwith, to mercy; but if not, to force a subjection. So the day being come, the trumpeters sounded, and that throughout the whole camp, that the men of war might be in readiness for that which then should be the work of the day. But when they that were in the town of Mansoul heard the sound of the trumpets throughout the camp of Shaddai, and thinking no other than that it must be in order to storm the corporation, they at first were put to great consternation of spirit; but after they were a little settled again, they also made what preparation they could for a war, if they did storm; else to secure themselves.

Well, when the utmost time was come, Boanerges was resolved to hear their answer; wherefore he sent out his trumpeter again, to summon Mansoul to a hearing of the message that they had brought from Shaddai. So he went and sounded, and the townsmen came up, but made Ear-gate as sure as they could. Now when

they were come up to the top of the wall Captain Boanerges desired to see the Lord Mayor, but my Lord Incredulity was then Lord Mayor, for he came in the room of my Lord Lustings. So Incredulity he came up, and showed himself over the wall; but when the Captain Boanerges had set his eyes upon him, he cried out aloud, "This is not he; where is my Lord Understanding, the ancient Lord Mayor of the town of Mansoul, for to him I would deliver my message?

Then said the giant, (for Diabolus was also come to the captain,) "Mr. captain, you have by your boldness given to Mansoul at least four summonses to subject herself to your King; by whose authority I know not, nor will I dispute that now. I ask therefore what is the reason of all this ado, or what would you be at if you know yourselves?

Then Captain Boanerges, whose was the black colours, and whose escutcheon was the three burning thunderbolts, (taking no notice of the giant or of his speech,) thus addressed himself to the town of Mansoul: "Be it known unto you, O unhappy and rebellious Mansoul! that the most gracious King, the great King Shaddai, my master, hath sent me unto you, with commission, (and so he showed to the town his broad seal,) to reduce you to his obedience: and he hath commanded me, in case you yield upon my summons, to carry it to you as if you were my friend or brother; but he also hath bid that if, after summons to submit, you stand out and rebell, we should endeavour to take you by force."

Then stood forth Captain Conviction, and said, (his was the pale colours, and for an escutheon he had the book of the law wide open, &c.) "Hear, O Mansoul! Thou, O Mansoul, was once famous for innocency, but now thou art degenerated into lies and deceit. Thou hast heard what my brother the Captain Boanerges hath said; and it is your wisdom, and will be your happiness, to stoop to, and accept of conditions of peace and mercy, when offered, especially when offered by one against whom thou hast rebelled, and one who is of power to tear thee in pieces; for so is Shaddai our King; nor, when he is angry, can any one stand before him. If you say you have not sinned, nor acted rebellion against our King, the whole of your doings since the day that you cast off his service, (and there was the beginning of your sin,) will sufficiently testify against you. What else means your hearkening to the tyrant, and your receiving him for your king? What means else your rejecting of the laws of Shaddai, and your obeying of Diabolus? Yea, what means this your taking up of arms against, and the shutting of your gates upon us, the faithful servants of your King? Be ruled then, and accept of my brother's invitation, and overstand not the time of mercy, but agree with thine adversary quickly. Ah Mansoul! suffer not thyself to be kept from mercy, and to be run into a thousand miseries, by the flattering wiles of Diabolus. Perhaps that piece of deceit may attempt to make you believe that we seek our own profit in this our service; but know, it is obedience to our King, and love to your happiness, that is the cause of this undertaking of ours.

"Again, I say to thee, O Mansoul! consider if it be not amazing grace, that Shaddai should so humble himself as he doth. Now he by us reasons with you in a way of entreaty and sweet persuasions, that you would subject yourselves to him. Has he that need of you that we are sure you have of him? No, no, but he is merciful, and will not that Mansoul should die, but turn to him and live."

Then stood forth Captain Judgement, whose was the red colors, and for an escutcheon he had the burning fiery furnace; and he said, "O ye, the inhabitants of the town of Mansoul! that have lived so long in rebellion, and acts of treason against the King Shaddai, know that we come not to-day to this place, in this manner, with our message of our own minds, or to revenge our own quarrel; it is the King my Master, that hath sent us to reduce you to your obedience to him, the which if you refuse in a peaceable way to yield, we have commission to compel you thereto. And never think, of yourselves, nor yet suffer the tyrant Diabolus to persuade you to think, that our King by his power is not able to bring you down, and to lay you under his feet; for he is the former of all things, and if he touches the mountains they smoke. Nor will the gate of the King's clemency stand always open; for the day that shall burn like an oven is before him yea it hasteth greatly, it slumbereth not.

"O Mansoul! is it little in thine eyes, that our King doth offer thee mercy, and that, after so many provocations? Yea, he still holdeth out his golden sceptre to thee, and will not yet suffer his gate to be shut against thee. Wilt thou provoke him to do it? If so, consider of what I say: to thee it is opened no more for ever. If thou sayest thou shalt not see him, yet judgment is before him; therefore trust thou in him: yea, because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke; then a great ransom cannot deliver thee. Will he esteem thy riches? No, not gold, nor all the forces of strength. He hath prepared his throne for judgment, for he will come with fire and with his chariots, like a whirlwind to render his anger with fury,

and his rebukes with flames of fire. Therefore, O Mansoul, take heed, lest after thou hast fulfilled the judgment of the wicked, justice and judgment should take hold of thee." Now, while the Captain Judgment was making of this oration to the town of Mansoul, it was observed by some that Diabolus trembled; but he proceeded in his parable, and said, "O thou woful town of Mansoul! wilt thou not yet set open thy gate to receive us, the deputies of thy King, and those that would rejoice to see thee live! Can thy heart endure, or can thy hands be strong in the day that he shall deal in judgment with thee! I say, canst thou endure to be forced to drink as one would drink sweet wine, the sea of wrath that our King has prepared for Diabolus and his angels? Consider betimes, consider."

Then stood forth the fourth captain, the noble Captain Execution, and said, "O town of Mansoul! once famous, but now like the fruitless bough; once the delight of the high ones, but now a den for Diabolus; hearken also to me, and to the words that I shall speak to thee in the name of the great Shaddai. Behold the axe is laid to the root of the trees; every tree, therefore, that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire.

"Thou, O town of Mansoul! hast hitherto been this fruitless tree; thou bearest nought but thorns and briars. Thy evil fruit bespeaks thee not to be a good tree: thy grapes are grapes of gall, thy clusters are bitter. Thou hast rebelled against thy King; and lo! we, the power and force of Shaddai, are the axe that is laid to thy roots. What sayest thou, wilt thou turn? I say again, tell me before the first blow is given, wilt thou turn? O turn, turn! Our axe must first be laid to thy root, before it be laid at thy root; it must first be laid to thy root in a way of threatening, before it is laid at thy root by way of execution; and between these two is required thy repentance, and this is all the time that thou hast. What wilt thou do? Wilt thou turn, or shall I smite? If I fetch my blow, Mansoul down you go; for I have commission to lay my axe at, as well as to, thy roots; nor will any thing but yielding to our King, prevent doing of execution.—What art thou fit for, O Mansoul! if mercy prevent not but to be hewn down, and cast into the fire and burned?

"O Mansoul! patience and forbearance do not act for ever; a year or two, or three, they may, but if thou provoke by a three year's rebellion, (and thou hast already done more than this,) then what follows, but cut it down? Nay, after that, thou shalt cut it down. And dost thou think that these are but threatenings, or that our King has not power to execute his words? O Mansoul! thou wilt find that, in the words of our King, when they are by sinners made little or light of, there is not only threatening but burning coals of fire.

"Thou hast been a cumber-ground long already; and wilt thou continue so still? Thy sin has brought this army to thy walls; and shall bring it in judgment to do execution into thy town? Thou hast heard what the captains have said, but as yet thou shutest thy gates. Speak out, Mansoul; wilt thou do so still? or wilt thou accept of conditions of peace?"

These brave speeches of these four noble captains, the town of Mansoul refused to hear, yet a sound thereof did beat against Ear-gate, though the force thereof could not break it open. In fine, the town desired a time to prepare their answer to these demands. The captains then told them, "That if they would throw out to them one Ill-pause that was in the town, that they might reward him according to his works, then they would give them time to consider; but if they would not cast him to them over the wall of Mansoul, then they would give them none: for said they, we know that so long as Ill-pause draws breath in Mansoul, all good consideration will be confounded, and nothing but mischief will come thereon."

Then Diabolus, who was there present, being loth to lose his Ill-pause, because he was his orator, (and yet be sure he had, could the captains have laid their fingers on him,) was resolved at this instant to give them answer by himself; but then changing his mind, he commanded the then Lord Mayor, the Lord Incredulity to do it; saying, "My Lord do you give these runagates an answer, and speak out, that Mansoul may hear and understand you."

So Incredulity, at Diabolus' command, began and said, "Gentleman, you have here, as we do behold, to the disturbance of our prince, and the molestation of the town of Mansoul, camped against it; but from whence you come we will not know, and what you are we will not believe. Indeed you tell us in your terrible speeches, that you have this authority from Shaddai; but by what right he commands you to do it, of that we shall yet be ignorant.

"You have also, by the authority aforesaid, summoned this town to desert her lord; and for protection to yield up herself to the great Shaddai, your King; flatteringly telling her, that if she will do it, he will pass by, and not charge her with her past offences.

"Further, you have also, to the terror of the town of Mansoul, threatened with great and sore destructions to punish this corporation, if she consents not to do as your wills would have her.

"Now, captains, from whensoever you come, and though your designs be never so right, yet know ye, that neither my Lord Diabolus, nor I his servant Incredulity, nor yet our brave Mansoul, doth regard either your persons, message, or the King that you say hath sent you. His power, his greatness, his vengeance, we fear not; nor will we yield at all to your summons.

"As for the war that you threaten to make upon us, we must therein defend ourselves as well as we can; and know ye, that we are not without wherewithall to bid defiance to you. And, in short, for I will not be tedious, I tell you, that we take you to be some vagabond runagate crew, that having shaken off all obedience to your king, have gotten together in tumultuous manner, and are ranging from place to place, to see, if, through the flatteries you are skilled to make on the one side, and threats wherewith you think to fright on the other, to make some silly town, city, or country, to desert their place, and leave it to you; but Mansoul is none of them.

"To conclude, we dread you not, we fear you not, nor will we obey your summons: our gates we keep shut upon you, our place we will keep you out of; nor will we long thus suffer you to sit down before us. Our people must live in quiet; your appearance doth disturb them: wherefore arise with bag and baggage and be gone, or we will let fly from the walls against you."

This oration, made by old Incredulity was seconded by desperate Willbewill, in words to this effect: "Gentlemen, We have heard your demands, and the noise of your threats, and we have heard the sound of your summons: but we fear not your force, we regard not your threats, but will still abide as you found us. And we command you, that in three days time you cease to appear in these parts, or you shall know what it is once to dare offer to rouse the lion Diabolus, when asleep in his town of Mansoul."

The recorder, whose name was Forget-good, he also added as followeth: "gentlemen, my Lords, as you see, have with mild and gentle words, answered your rough and angry speeches; they have, moreover, in my hearing, given you leave quietly to depart as you came. Wherefore take their kindness and be gone; we might have come out with force upon you, and have caused you to feel the dint of our swords; but as we love ease and quiet ourselves, so we love not to hurt or molest others."

Then did the town of Mansoul shout for joy; as if, by Diabolus and his crew, some great advantage had heen gotten of the captains. They also rang the bells, and made merry, and danced upon the walls.

Diabolus also returned to the castle, and the Lord Mayor and Recorder to their place; but the Lord Willbewill took special care that the gates should be secured with double guards, double bolts, and double locks and bars. And that Ear-gate especially, might the better be looked to, for that was the gate in at which the King's forces sought most to enter; the Lord Willbewill made one old Mr. Prejudice (an angry and ill-conditioned fellow) captain of the ward at that gate, and put under his power sixty men, called deaf-men: men advantageous for that service, forasmuch as they mattered no words of the captains, nor of their soldiers.

Now, when the captains saw the answer of the great ones, that they could not get an hearing from the old natives of the town, and that Mansoul was resolved to give the Kings army battle, they prepared themselves to receive them, and to try it out by the power of the arm. And first they made their force more formidable against Ear-gate. For they knew that unless they could penetrate that, no good could be done upon the town. This done, they put the rest of their men in their places. After which they gave out the word which was, 'Ye must be born again.' Then they sounded the trumpet; then they in the town made them answer, with shout against shout, charge against charge, and so the battle began. Now they in the town had planted upon the tower over Ear gate, two great guns, the one called High-mind, and the other Heady. Under these two guns they trusted much; they were cast in the castle by Diabolus' founder, whose name was Mr. Puff-up, and mischievous pieces they were. But so vigilant and watchful when the captains saw them were they, that though sometimes their shot would go by their ears with a whiz, yet they did them no harm. By these two guns the townsfolk made no question but greatly to annoy the camp of Shaddai, and well enough to secure the gate, but they had not much cause to boast of what execution they did, as by what follows will be gathered.

The famous Mansoul had also some other small pieces in it, of the which they made use against the camp of Shaddai.

They from the camp also did as stoutly, and with as much of that as may, in truth, be called valour, let fly as fast at the town and at Ear-gate; for they saw that unless they could break open Ear-gate, it would be but in vain to batter the wall. Now the King's captains had brought with them several slings, and two or three battering-rams; with their slings therefore they battered the houses and people of the town, and with their rams they sought to break Ear-gate open.

The camp and the town had several skirmishes, and brisk encounters, while the captains with their engines made many brave attempts to break open or beat down the tower that was over Ear-gate, and at the said gate to make their entrance. But Mansoul stood it out so lustily, through the rage of Diabolus, the valour of the Lord Willbewill, and the conduct of old Incredulity the Mayor, and Mr. Forget-good the Recorder, that the charge and expense of that summer's wars, (on the King's side,) seemed to be almost quite lost, and the advantage to return to Mansoul. But when the captains saw how it was, they made a fair retreat, and intrenched themselves in their winter quarters. Now, in this war, you must needs think, there was much loss on both sides, of which be pleased to accept of this brief account following.

The King's captains, when they marched from the court to come up against Mansoul to war, as they came crossing over the country, they happened to light upon three young fellows that had a mind to go for soldiers; proper men they were, and men of courage and skill to appearance. Their names were Mr. Tradition, Mr. Human-wisdom, and Mr. Man's-invention. So they came up to the captains, and proffered their services to Shaddai. The captains then told them of their design, and bid them not to be rash in their offers; but the young men told them they had considered the thing before; and that hearing they were upon their march for such a design, came hither on purpose to meet them, that they might be listed under their Excellencies. Then Captain Boanerges, for that they were men of courage, listed them into his company, and so away they went to the war.

Now, when the war was begun, in one of the briskest skirmishes, so it was, that a company of the Lord Willbewill's men sallied out at the sally-port, or postern of the town, and fell in upon the rear of Captain Boanerges' men, where these three fellows happened to be; so they took them prisoners, and away they carried them into the town, where they had not laid long in durance, but it began to be noised about the streets of the town what three notable prisoners the Lord Willbewill's men had taken, and brought in prisoners out of the camp of Shaddai. At length tidings thereof was carried to Diabolus to the castle, to wit, what my Lord Willbewill's men had done, and whom they had taken prisoners.

Then Diabolus called for Willbewill to know the certainty of this matter. So he asked him, and he told him; then did the giant send for the prisoners, who, when they were come, demanded of them who they were, whence they came, and what they did in the camp of Shaddai? and they told him. Then he sent them to ward again. Not many days after he sent for them to him again, and then asked them if they would be willing to serve him against their former captains? They then told him that they did not so much live by religion, as by the fates of fortune; and that since his lordship was willing to entertain them, they should be willing to serve him.

Now while things were thus in hand, there was one Captain Anything, a great doer in the town of Mansoul, and to this Captain Anything, did Diabolus send these men, with a note under his hand, to receive them into his company; the contents of which letter were thus:

"Anything, my darling, the three men that are the bearers of this letter have a desire to serve me in the war; nor know I better to whose conduct to commit them, than to thine. Receive them, therefore, in my name, and as need shall require, make use of them against Shaddai and his men. Farewell." So they came, and he received them, and he made two of them serjeants; he made Mr. Man's-invention his ancient-bearer. But thus much for this; and now to return to the camp.

They of the camp did also some execution upon the town; they did beat down the roof of the old Lord-Mayor's house, and so laid him more open than he was before. They had almost with a sling slain my Lord Willbewill outright; but he made a shift to recover again. But they made a notable slaughter among the aldermen, for with one only shot they cut off six of them; to wit, Mr. Swearing, Mr. Whoring, Mr. Fury, Mr. Stand-to-lies, Mr. Drunkenness, and Mr. Cheating.

They dismounted the two guns that stood upon the tower over Ear-gate, and laid them flat in the dirt. I told you before, that the king's noble captains had drawn off to their winter-quarters, and had there intrenched themselves and their carriages, so as, with the best advantage to their king, and the greatest annoyance to the enemy, they might give seasonable and warm alarms to the town of Mansoul. And this design of them did so hit, that, I may say, they did almost what they would to the molestation of the corporation.

For now could not Mansoul sleep securely as before, nor could they now go to their debaucheries with that quietness, as in times past. For they had from the camp of Shaddai such frequent, warm and terrifying alarms, first at one gate, and then at another, and again at all the gates at once, that they were broken as to former peace. Yea, they had their alarms so frequently, and that when the nights were at longest

the weather coldest, and so consequently the season most unseasonable, that that winter was, to the town of Mansoul, a winter by itself. Sometimes, the trumpets would sound, and sometimes the slings would whirl the stones into the town. Sometimes ten thousand of the king's soldiers would be running round the walls of Mansoul at midnight, shouting, and lifting up the voice for the battle. Sometimes, again, some of them in the town would be wounded, and their cry and lamentable voice would be heard, to the grert molestation of the now languishing town of Mansoul. Yea, so distressed with those that laid siege against them were they, that I dare say Diabolus their king had in these days his rest much broken.

In these days, as I was informed, new thoughts, and thoughts that began to run counter one to another, began to possess the minds of the men of the town of Mansoul. Some would say, "There is no living thus." Others would then reply, "This will be over shortly." Then would a third stand up and answer, "Let us turn to the King Shaddai, and so put an end to these troubles." And a fourth would come in with a fear, saying. "I doubt he will not receive us." The old gentleman, too, the Recorder, that was so before Diabolus took Mansoul, he also began to talk aloud; and his words were now to the town of Mansoul, as if they were great claps of thunder. No noise now so terrible to Mansoul as was his, with the noise of the soldiers, and shoutings of the captains.

Also things began to grow scarce in Mansoul, now the things that her soul lusted after were departing from her. Upon all her pleasant things there was a blast, and burning instead of beauty. Wrinkles now, and some shows of the shadow of death, were upon the inhabitants of Mansoul. And now, O how glad would Mansoul have been, to have enjoyed quietness and satisfaction of mind, though joined with the meanest condition in the world!

The captains also, in the deep of the winter, did send by the mouth of Boanerges' trumpeter, a summons to Mansoul to yield up herself to the King, the great King Shaddai. They said it once, and twice, and thrice; not knowing but that, at sometimes, there might be in Mansoul some willingness to surrender up themselves unto him, might they but have the colour of an invitation to do it under. Yea, so far as I could gather, the town had been surrendered up to them before now, had it not been for the opposition of old Incredulity, and the fickleness of the thoughts of my Lord Willbewill. Diabolus also began to rave, wherefore Mansoul, as to yielding, was not yet all of one mind: therefore, they still lay distressed under these perplexing fears.

I told you but now, that they of the king's army had this winter sent three times to Mansoul to submit herself.

The first time the trumpeter went, he went with words of peace, telling of them, "That the captains, the noble captains of Shaddai, did pity and bewail the misery of the now perishing town of Mansoul, and was troubled to see them so much at a stand in the way of their own deliverance. He said, moreover, that the captains bid him tell them, that if now poor Mansoul would humble herself, and turn, her former rebellions and most notorious treasons should by their merciful King be forgiven them, yea, and forgotten too. And having bid them beware that they stood not in their own way, that they opposed not themselves, nor made themselves their own losers;" he returned again into the camp.

The second time the trumpeter went he did treat them a little roughly. For after sounding the trumpet, he told them, "That their continuing in their rebellion did but chafe, and heat the spirit of the captains, and that they were resolved to make a conquest of Mansoul, or to lay their bones before the town-walls."

He went again the third time, and dealt with them yet more roughly, telling of them, "That now, since they had been so horribly profane, he did not certainly know whether the captains were inclined to mercy or judgment; only, said he, they commanded me to give you a summons to open the gates unto them." So he returned, and went into the camp.

These three summons, and especially the two last, did so distress the town, that they presently called a consultation, the result of which was this, that my Lord Willbewill should go up to Ear-gate, and there with sound of trumpet, call to the captains of the camp for a parley. Well, the Lord Willbewill sounded upon the wall, so the captains came up in their harness, with their ten thousands at their feet. The townsmen then told the captains, that they had heard and considered their summons, and would come to an agreement with them, and with their King Shaddai, upon such certain terms, articles, and propositions, as, with and by the order of their prince, they to them were appointed to propound, to wit, they would agree upon these grounds to be one people with them.

"1. If that those of their own company, as the new Lord Mayor, and their Mr. Forget-good, with their brave Lord Willbewill, might under Shaddai be still the governors of the town, castle, and gates of Mansoul.

"2. Provided that no man that now serv-

eth under their great giant Diabolus be by Shaddai cast out of the house, harbour, or the freedom, that he hath hitherto enjoyed in the famous town of Mansoul.

"3. That it shall be granted them, that they of the town of Mansoul shall enjoy certain of their rights and privileges; to wit, such as have been formerly granted them, and that they have long lived in the enjoyment of, under the reign of their King Diabolus, that now is and long has been their only lord, and great defender.

"4. That no new law, officer, or executioner of law or office, shall have any power over them, without their own choice and consent."

These be our propositions or conditions of peace; and upon these terms, said they, we will submit to your King.

But when the captains had heard this weak and feeble offer of the town of Mansoul, and their high and bold demands, they made to them again by their noble captain, the Captain Boanerges, this speech following:

"O ye inhabitants of the town of Mansonl, when I heard your trumpet sounded for a parley with us, I can truly say, I was glad; but when you said you were willing to submit yourselves to your King and Lord, then I was yet more glad; but when, by your silly provisoes, and foolish cavils, you lay the stumbling-block of your iniquity before your own faces, then was my gladness turned into sorrows, and my hopeful beginnings of your return, into languishing, fainting fears.

I count, that old Ill-pause, the ancient enemy of Mansoul, did draw up those proposals, that now you present us with, as termes of an agreement, but they deserve not to be admitted to sound in the ear of any man that pretends to have service for Shaddai. We do therefore jointly, and that with the highest disdain, refuse and reject such things as the greatest of iniquities.

But, O Mansoul, If you will give yourselves into our hands, or rather into the hands of our King, and will trust him to make such terms with and for you, as shall seem good in his eyes,(and I dare say they shall be such as you shall find to be most profitable to you,) then we will receive you, and be at peace with you; but if you like not to trust yourselves in the arms of Shaddai our King, then things are but where they were before, and we know also what we have to do."

Then cried out old Incredulity the Lord-Mayor, and said, "And who, being out of the hands of their enemies, as you see we are now, will be so foolish as to put the staff out of their own hands, into the hands of they know not who? I, for my part will never yield to so unlimited a proposition. Do we know the manner and temper of their King? It is said by some, that he will be angry with his subjects, if but the breadth of an hair they chance to step out of the way. And of others, that he requireth of them much more than they can perform. Wherefore it seems, O Mansoul, to be thy wisdom to take good heed what thou dost in this matter; for if you once yield, you give up yourselves to another, and so you are no more your own! Wherefore, to give up yourselves to an unlimited power, is the greatest folly in the world: for now you indeed may repent, but can never justly complain. But do you indeed know, when you are his, which of you he will kill, and which of you he will save alive? Or whether he will not cut off every one of us, and send out of his own country another new people, and cause them to inhabit this town?"

This speech of the lord-Mayor undid all, and threw flat to the ground their hopes of an accord; wherefore the captains returned to their trenches, to their tents, and to their men, as they were; and the Mayor to the castle, and to his king.

Now Diabolus had waited for his return; for he had heard that they had been at their points. So when he was come into the chamber of state, Diabolus saluted him with, "Welcome my lord; how went matters betwixt you to-day?" So the Lord Incredulity (with a low congee) told him the whole of the matter, saying, "Thus and thus said the captains of Shaddai, and thus said I." The which when it was told to Diabolus, he was very glad to hear it, and said, "My Lord Mayor, my faithful Incredulity, I have proved thy fidelity above ten times already, but never yet found thee false. I do promise thee, if we rub over this brunt, to prefer thee to a place of honor, a place far better than to be Lord-Mayor of Mansoul. I will make thee my Universal Deputy, and thou shalt, next to me, have all nations under thy hand; yea and thou shalt lay hands upon them that they may not resist thee; nor shall any of our vassals walk more at liberty, but those that shall be content to walk in thy fetters."

Now came the Lord-Mayor out from Diabolus, as if he had obtained a favor indeed; wherefore, to his habitation he goes in great state, and thinks to feed himself well enough with hopes, until the time came that his greatness should be enlarged.

But now, though the Lord-Mayor and Diabolus did thus well agree, yet this repulse to the brave captains put Mansoul into a mutiny. For while old Incredulity went into the castle to congratulate his lord with what had passed, the old Lord-Mayor that was so before Diabolus came to the town,

to wit, my Lord Understanding and the old Recorder, Mr. Conscience, getting intelligence of what had passed at Ear-gate, (for you must know that they might not be suffered to be at that debate, lest they should then have mutinied for the captains;) but I say they got intelligence what had passed there, and were much concerned therewith; wherefore they, getting some of the town together, began to possess them with the reasonableness of the noble captains' demands, and with the bad consequences that would follow upon the speech of old Incredulity the Lord-Mayor; to wit, how little reverence he showed therein, either to the captains or to their King; also how he implicitly charged them with unfaithfulness and treachery: for what less, quoth they, could be made of his words, when he said he would not yield to their propositions, and added, moreover, a supposition that he would destroy us, when before he had sent us word that he would show us mercy. The multitude being now possessed with the conviction of the evil that old Incredulity had done, began to run together by companies in all places, and in every corner of the streets of Mansoul; and first they began to mutter, then to talk openly, and after that they run to and fro, and cried as they run, "O the brave captains of Shaddai! would we were under the government of the captains, and of Shaddai their King." When the Lord-Mayor had intelligence that Mansoul was in an uproar, down he comes to appease the people, and thought to have quashed their heat with the bigness and the show of his countenance. But when they saw him, they came running upon him, and had doubtless done him a mischief had he not betaken himself to home. However they strongly assaulted the house where he was, to have pulled it down about his ears; but the place was too strong; so they failed of that. So he, taking some courage, addressed himself out at a window, to the people in this manner:

"Gentlemen, what is the reason that there is here such an uproar to-day?"

Und. Then answered my Lord Understanding: "It is even because that thou and thy master have carried it not rightly, and as you should, to the captains of Shaddai; for in three things you are faultly: First, in that you would not let Mr. Conscience and myself be at the hearing of your discourse. Secondly: In that you propounded such terms of peace to the captains, that by no means could be granted, unless they had intended that their Shaddai should have been only a titular prince, and that Mansoul should still have had power, by law, to have lived in all lewdness and vanity before him, and so, by consequence, Diabolus should still here be king in power, and the other only king in name. Thirdly: For that thou didst thyself, after the captains had showed us upon what conditions they would have received us to mercy, even undo all again with thy unsavoury, and unseasonable, and ungodly speech."

Incred. When old Incredulity had heard this speech, he cried out, "Treason! treason! To your arms, to your arms, O ye trusty friends of Diabolus in Mansoul!"

Und. "Sir, You may put upon my words what meaning you please, but I am sure that the captains of such an high Lord as theirs is, deserved a better treatment at your hands."

Incred. Then said old Incredulity, "This is but little better. But Sir, quoth he, what I spake, I spake for my prince, for his government, and the quieting of the people, whom by your unlawful actions, you have this day set to mutiny against us."

Cons. Then replied the old Recorder, whose name was Mr. Conscience, and said, "Sir, you ought not thus to retort upon what my Lord understanding hath said. It is evident enough that he hath spoken the truth, and that you are an enemy to Mansoul; be convinced then of the evil of your saucy and malapert language, and of the grief that you have put the captains to; yea, and of the damages that you have done to Mansoul thereby. Had you accepted of the conditions, the sound of the trumpet, and the alarm of war, had now ceased about the town of Mansoul; but that dreadful sound abides, and your want of wisdom in your speech has been the cause of it."

Incred. Then said old Incredulity, "Sir, if I live, I will do your errand to Diabolus, and then you shall have an answer to your words. Meanwhile we will seek the good of the town, and not ask counsel of you."

Und. "Sir, your prince and you are both foreigners to Mansoul, and not the natives thereof. And who can tell, but that when you have brought us into greater straits, (when you also shall see, that youselves can be safe by no other means than by flight,) you may leave us and shift for yourselves, or set us on fire and go away in the smoke, or by the light of the burning, and so leave us in our ruins."

Incred. "Sir, you forget that you are under a governor, and that you ought to demean yourself like a subject, and know ye, when my lord the king shall hear of this day's work he will give you but little thanks for your labour."

Now, while these gentlemen were thus in their chiding words, down comes from the walls and gates of the town, the Lord Willbewill, Mr. Prejudice, old Ill-pause, and several of the new made aldermen and burgesses, and they asked the reason of the hubbub and tumult. And with that

every man began to tell his own tale, so that nothing could be heard distinctly. Then was a silence commanded, and the old fox Incredulity began to speak: "My lord," quoth he, "here are a couple of peevish gentlemen, that have, as a fruit of their dispositions, and, as I fear, through the advice of one Mr. Discontent, tumultuously gathered this company against me this day; and also attempted to run the town into acts of rebellion against our prince."

Then stood up all the Diabolonians that were present, and affirmed these things to be true.

Now when they that took part with my Lord Understanding, and with Mr. Conscience, perceived that they were like to come to the worst, for that force and power was on the other side, they came in for their help and relief; so a great company was on both sides. Then they on Incredulity's side would have had the two old gentlemen presently away to prison; but they on the other side, said they should not. Then they began to cry up parties again; the Diabolonians cried up old Incredulity, Forgetgood, the new aldermen, and their great one Diabolus; and the other party, they as fast cried up Shaddai, the captains, his laws, their mercifulness, and applauded their conditions and ways. Thus the bickerment went awhile; at last they passed from words to blows, and now they were knocks on both sides. The good old gentlemen Mr. Conscience, was knocked down twice by one of the Diabolonians, whose name was Mr. Benumbing. And my Lord Understanding had like to have been slain with an harquebus, but that he that had shot wanted to take his aim right. Nor did the other side wholly escape, for there was one Mr. Rash-head, a Diabolonian, that had his brains beaten out by Mr. Mind, the Lord Willbewill's servant: and it made me laugh to see how old Mr. Prejudice was kicked and tumbled about in the dirt. For though awhile since he was made captain of a company of the Diabolonians, to the hurt and damage of the town, yet now they had got him under their feet, and I will assure you he had, by some of the Lord Understanding's party, his crown soundly cracked to boot. Mr. Anything also, he became a brisk man in the broil, but both sides were against him, because he was true to none. Yet he had, for his malapertness, one of his legs broken, and he that did it, wished it had been his neck. Much harm more was done on both sides; but this must not be forgotten, it was now a wonder to see my Lord Willbewill so indifferent as he was; he did not seem to take one side more than another, only it was perceived that he smiled to see how old prejudice was tumbled up and down in the dirt. Also when Captain Anything came halting up before him, he seemed to take but little notice of him.

Now when the uproar was over, Diabolus sends for my Lord Understanding and Mr. Conscience, and claps them both up in prison, as the ringleaders and managers of this most heavy riotous rout in Mansoul. Now the town began to be quiet again, and the prisoners were used hardly; yea, he thought to have made them away, but that the present juncture did not serve for that purpose; for that war was in all their gates. But let us return again to our story. The captains, when they were gone back from the gate, and were come into the camp again, called a council of war, to consult what was further for them to do. Now some said, let's go up presently and fall upon the town, but the greatest part thought, rather better it would be, to give them another summons to yield; and the reason why they thought this to be best, was, because, that so far as could be perceived, the town of Mansoul now was more inclinable than heretofore. And if, said they, while some of them are in a way of inclination, we should by ruggedness give them distaste, we may set them further from closing with our summons, than we would be willing they should.

Wherefore to this advice they agreed, and called a trumpeter, put words into his mouth, set him his time, and bid him God speed. Well, many hours were not expired before the trumpeter addressed himself to his journey. Wherefore coming up to the wall of the town; he steereth his course to Ear-gate, and there sounded as he was commanded. They then that were within, come out to see what was the matter, and the trumpeter made them this speech following:

"O hard-hearted and deplorable town of Mansoul, how long wilt thou love thy sinful, sinful simplicity, and, ye fools, delight in your scorning! As yet despise you the offers of peace and deliverance? As yet will ye refuse the golden offers of Shaddai, and trust to the lies and falsehoods of Diabolus? Think you, when Shaddai should have conquered you, that the remembrance of these your carriages towards him will yield you peace and comfort; or that by ruffling language you can make him afraid as a grasshopper? Doth he entreat you for fear of you? Do you think you are stronger than he? Look to the heavens; and behold and consider the stars, how high are they? Can you stop the sun from running its course, and hinder the moon from giving her light? Can you count the number of the stars, or stay the bottles of heaven? Can you call for the waters of the sea, and cause them to cover

the face of the ground? Can you behold every one that is proud, and abase him, and bind their faces in secret? Yet these are some of the works of our King, in whose name, this day, we come up unto you, that you may be brought under his authority. In his name, therefore, I summon you again to yield up yourselves to his captains."

At this summons the Mansoulians seemed to be at a stand, and knew not what answer to make: Wherefore Diabolus forthwith apeared, took upon him to do it himself; and thus he begins, but turns his speech to them of Mansoul:

"Gentlemen," quoth he, "and my faithful subjects, if it is true that this summoner hath said, concerning the greatness of their King, by his terror you will always be kept in bondage, and so be made to sneak: yea, how can you now, though he is at a distance, endure to think of such a mighty one? And if not to think of him while at a distance, how can you endure to be in his presence? I, your prince, am familiar with you, and you may play with me as you would with a grasshopper. Consider, therefore, what is for your profit, and remember the immunities that I have granted you.

"Farther, if all be true that this man hath said, how comes it to pass that the subjects of Shaddai are so enslaved in all places where they come? None in the universe so unhappy as they, none so trampled upon as they.

"Consider, my Mansoul:—Would thou wert as loath to leave me as I am loath to leave thee? But consider, I say, the ball is yet at thy foot; liberty you have, if you know how to use it; yea, a king you have too, if you can tell how to love and obey him."

Upon this speech the town of Mansoul did again harden their hearts yet more against the captains of Shaddai. The thoughts of his greatness did quite quash them, and the thoughts of his holiness sunk them in despair. Wherefore, after a short consultation, they, (of the Diabolonian party they were,) sent back this word by the trumpeter, "That for their parts they were resolved to stick to their king, but never to yield to Shaddai." So it was but in vain to give them any further summons, for they had rather die upon the place than yield. And now things seemed to be gone quite back, and Mansoul to be out of reach or call; yet the captains, who knew what their Lord could do, would not yet be beat out of heart. They therefore sent them another summons, more sharp and severe than the last; but the oftener they were sent unto, to be reconciled to Shaddai, the further off they were. As they called them so they went from them, yea, though they called them to the Most High.

So they ceased that way to deal with them any more, and inclined to think of another way. The captains therefore did gather themselves together, to have free conference among themselves, to know what was yet to be done to gain the town, and to deliver it from the tyranny of Diabolus: And one said after this manner, and another after that. Then stood up the right noble the Captain Conviction, and said, "My brethren, mine opinion is this:

"First, That we continually play our slings into the town, and keep it in a continual alarm, molesting of them day and night; by thus doing we shall stop the growth of their rampant spirit. For a lion may be tamed by continual molestations.

"Secondly, This done, I advise that, in the next place, we with one consent draw up a petition to our Lord Shaddai; by which after we have showed our King the condition of Mansoul, and of affairs here, and have begged his pardon for our no better success, we will earnestly implore his Majesty's help, and that he will please to send us more force and power. and some gallant and well spoken commander to head them; that so his majesty may not loose the benefit of these his good beginnings, but may complete his conquest upon the town of Mansoul."

To this speech of the noble Captain Conviction, they, as one man, consented; and agreed that a petition should forthwith be drawn up, and sent by a fit man away to Shaddai with speed. The contents of the petition were thus:

"Most gracious and glorious King, the Lord of the best world, and the builder of the town of Mansoul, we have, dread Sovreign, at thy commandment, put our lives in jeopardy, and at thy bidding made a war upon the famous town of Mansoul. When we went up against it, we did, according to our commission, first offer conditions of peace unto it: but they, great King, set light by our counsel, and would none of our reproof; they were for shutting of their gates, and for keeping us out of the town. They also mounted their guns, they sallied out upon us, and have done us what damage they oould, but we pursued them with alarm upon alarm, requiting of them with such retribution as was meet, and have done some execution upon the town.

"Diabolus, Incredulity, and Willbewill, are the great doers against us; now we are in our winter quarters, but so as that we do yet with an high hand, molest and distress the town.

"Once, as we think, had we had but one substantial friend in the town, such as would but have seconded the sound of our

summons, as they ought, the people might have yielded themselves; but there were none but enemies there, nor any to speak in behalf of our Lord to the town; wherefore though we have done as we could, yet Mansoul abides in a state of rebellion against thee.

"Now, King of kings, let it please thee to pardon the unsuccessfulness of thy servants, who have been no more advantageous in so desirable a work as the conquering of Mansoul is; and send, Lord, as we now desire, more forces to Mansoul, that it may be subdued; and a man to head them, that the town may both love and fear.

"We do not thus speak because we are willing to relinquish the wars, (for we are for laying of our bones against the place,) but that the town of Mansoul may be won for thy Majesty. We also pray thy Majesty for expedition in this matter, that after their conquest we may be at liberty to be sent about other thy gracious designs. Amen."

The petition thus drawn up, was sent away with haste to the King by the hand of that good man Mr. Love-to-Mansoul.

When this petition was come to the palace of the King, who should it be delivered to but to the King's Son? So he took and read it, and because the contents of it pleased him well, he mended it, and also in some things, added to the petition himself. So after he had made such amendments and additions as he thought convenient, with his own hand, he carried it in to the King; to whom, when he had, with obeisance delivered it, he put on authority and spake to it himself.

Now the King, at the sight of the petition, was glad; but how much more think you, when it was seconded by his son! It pleased him also to hear that his servants that had camped Mansoul, were so hearty in their work, and so steadfast in their resolves, and that they had already got some ground upon the famous town of Mansoul.

Wherefore the King called to him Emmanuel his Son; who said, Here am I, my Father. Then said the King, thou knowest as I do myself, the condition of the town of Mansoul, and what we have purposed, and what thou hast done to redeem it. Come now, therefore, my Son, and prepare thyself for the war, for thou shalt go to my camp at Mansoul. Thou shalt also there prosper, and prevail, and conquer the town of Mansoul.

Then said the King's Son, Thy law is within my heart. I delight to do thy will. This is the day that I have longed for, and the work that I have waited for all this while. Grant me, therefore, what force thou shalt in thy wisdom think meet, and I will go, and will deliver from Diabolus, and from his power, thy perishing town of Mansoul. My heart has been often pained within me, for the miserable town of Mansoul; but now it is rejoiced, but now it is glad; and with that he leaped over the mountains for joy, saying.

"I have not, in my heart, thought any thing too dear for Mansoul; the day of vengeance is in my heart, for thee, my Mansoul; and glad am I, that thou my Father, hast made me the captain of their salvation: and I will now begin to plague all those that have been a plague to my town of Mansoul, and will deliver it from their hand."

When the King's Son had said thus to his Father, it presently flew like lightning round about at court: yea, it there became the only talk, what Emmanuel was to go to do for the famous town of Mansoul. But you cannot think how the courtiers too were taken with the design of the Prince. Yea' so affected were they with this work, and with the justness of the war, that the highest lord, and greatest peer of the kingdom, did covet to have commissions under Emmanuel, to go to help to recover again to Shaddai the miserable town of Mansoul.

Then it was concluded, that some should go and carry tidings to the camp, that Emmanuel was to come to recover Mansoul, and that he would bring along with him so mighty and impregnable a force that he could not be resisted. But oh! how ready were the high ones at court, to run like lackeys to carry these tidings to the camp that was at Mansoul. Now when the captains perceived that the King would send Emmanuel his Son, and that it also delighted the Son to be sent on this errand by the great Shaddai his Father; they also, to show how they were pleased at the thoughts of his coming, gave a shout that made the earth rent at the sound thereof; yea, the mountains did answer again by echo, and Diabolus himself did totter and shake.

For you must know, that though the town of Mansoul itself was not much, if at all concerned with the project, (for, alas for them, they were wofully besotted, for they chiefley regarded their pleasure and their lusts,) yet Diabolus their governor was, for he had his spies continually abroad, who brought him intelligence of all things, and they told him what was doing at court against him, and that Emmanuel would certainly come with a power to invade him. Nor was there any man at court, nor peer of the kingdom, that Diabolus so feared as this prince. For if you remember, I showed you before that Diabolus had felt the weight of his hand already. So since it was he that was come, this made him the more afraid. Well you see how I have told you that the King's Son was engaged

to come from the court to save Mansoul, and that his Father had made him the Captain of the forces. The time therefore of his setting forth, being now expired, he addressed himself for his march, and taketh with him, for his power, five noble captains, and their forces.

The first was that famous captain, the noble Captain Credence, his were the red colors; and Mr. Promise bare them; and for a scutcheon he had the holy lamb and golden shield. and he had ten thousand men at his feet.

The second was that famous captain, the Captain Good-hope, his were blue colours. His standard-bearer was Mr. Expectation; and for a scutcheon he had the three golden anchors. And he had ten thousand men at his feet.

The third captain was that valiant captain, the Captain Charity, his standard-bearer was Mr. Pitiful, his were the green colours; and for his scutcheon he had three naked orphans embracing the bosom. And he had ten thousand men at his feet.

The fourth was that gallant commander the Captain Innocent, his standard-bearer was Mr. Harmless; his were the white colours, and for his scutcheon he had the golden doves.

The fifth was the truly loyal and well-beloved captain, the Captain Patience: his standard-bearer was Mr. Suffer-Long; his were the black colours; and for a scutcheon he had three arrows through the golden heart.

These were Emmanuel's captains, these their standard-bearers, their colours, and their scutcheons, and these the men under their command. So as was said, the brave Prince took his march to go to the town of Mansoul. Captain Credence led the van, and Captain Patience brought up the rear. So the other three with their men made up the main body; the Prince himself riding in his chariot at the head of them.

But when they set out for their march, O how the trumpets sounded, their armour glittered, and how the colours waved in the wind! The Prince's armor was all of gold, and it shone like the sun in the firmament. The captains' armor was of proof, and was in appearance like the glittering stars. There were also some from the court that rode reformades, for the love that they had to the King Shaddai, and for the happy deliverance of the town of Mansoul.

Emmanuel also, when he had thus set forward to go to recover the town of Mansoul, took with him, at the commandment of his father, fifty-four battering rams, and twelve slings, to whirl stones withal. Every one of these was made of pure gold and these they carried with them in the heart and body of their army, all along as they went to Mansoul.

So they marched till they came within less than a league of the town; and there they lay till the first four captains came thither, to acquaint him with matters. Then they took their journey to go to the town of Mansoul, and unto Mansoul they came. But when the old soldiers that were in the camp saw that they had new forces to join with, they again gave such a shout before the walls of the town of Mansoul, that it put Diabolus into onother fright. So they sat down before the town, not now as the other four captains did, to wit, against the gates of Mansoul only, but they environed it round on every side, and beset it behind and before, that so now let Mansoul look which way it will, it saw force and power lie in siege against it. Besides, there were mounts cast up against it.

The Mount Gracious was on the one-side, and Mount Justice on the other. Farther, there were several small banks and advance grounds, as Plaintruth-hill, and No-sin-banks, where many of the slings were placed against the town. Upon Mount Gracious were planted four, and upon Mount Justice were placed as many: and the rest were conveniently placed in several parts round about the town. Five of the best battering rams, that is, of the biggest of them, were placed upon Mount Hearken; a mount cast up hard by Eargate, with intent to break that open.

Now when the men of the town saw the multitude of the soldiers that were come up against the place, and the rams and slings, and the mounts on which they were planted, together with the glittering of the armor, and the waving of their colors, they were forced to shift, and shift, and again to shift their thoughts; but they hardly changed for thoughts more stout, but rather for thoughts more faint. For though before they thought themselves sufficiently guarded; yet now they began to think that no man knew what would be their hap or lot.

When the good Prince Emmanuel had thus beleaguered Mansoul, in the first place he hangs out the white flag, which he caused to be set up among the golden slings that were planted upon Mount Gracious. And this he did for two reasons: 1. To give notice to Mansoul that he could and would yet be gracious, if they turned to him. 2. And that he might leave them the more without excuse, should he destroy them, they continuing in their rebellion.

So the white flag, with the three golden doves in it, was hanged out for two days together, to give them time and space to consider. But they, as was hinted before, as if they were unconcerned, made no re-

ply to the favorable signal of the Prince.

Then he commanded, and they set the red flag upon that mount called Mount Justice. It was the red flag of captain Judgment, whose scutcheon was the burning fiery furnace. And this also stood waving before them in the wind, for several days together. But look, how they carried it under the white flag, when that was hanged out, so they did also when the red one was: and yet he took no advantage of them.

Then he commanded again that his servant would hang out the black flag of defiance against them, whose scutcheon was the three burning thunderbolts. But as unconcerned was Mansoul at this, as at those that went before. But when the Prince saw, that neither mercy, nor judgment, nor execution of judgment, would or could come near the heart of Mansoul, he was touched with much compunction, and said, Surely this strange carriage of the town of Mansoul doth rather arise from ignorance of the manner and feats of war, than from a secret defiance of us, and abhorrence of their own lives; or if they know the manner of the war of their own, yet not the rites and ceremonies of the war in which we are concerned, when I make wars upon mine enemy Diabolus.

Therefore he sent to the town of Mansoul, to let them know what he meant by those signs and ceremonies of the flag; and also to know of them which of the things they would choose, whether grace and mercy, or judgment and the execution of judgment. All this while they kept their gates shut with locks, bolts, and bars, as fast as they could. Their guards also were doubled, and their watch made as strong as they could. Diabolus also did pluck up what heart he could, to encourage the town to make resistance.

The townsmen also made answer to the Prince's messenger, in substance, according to that which follows:

"Great sir, as to what by your messenger you have signified to us, whether we will accept of your mercy, or fall by your justice? we are bound by the law and custom of this place, and can give you no positive answer. For it is against the law, government, and the prerogative-royal of our King, to make either peace or war, without him. But this we will do, we will petition that our prince will come down to the wall, and there give you such treatment as he shall think fit, and profitable for us."

When the good Prince Emmanuel heard this answer and saw the slavery and bondage of the people, and how much content they were to abide in the chains of the tyrant Diabolus, it grieved him at the heart. And indeed, when at any time he perceived that any were contented under the slavery of the giant, he would be affected with it.

But to return again to our purpose. After the town had carried this news to Diabolus, and had told him moreover, that the Prince that lay in the leaguer without the wall, waited upon them for an answer, he refused, and huffed as well as he could, but in heart he was afraid.

Then, said he, I will go down to the gates myself and give him such an answer as I think fit. So he went down to Mouth-gate, and there addressed himself to speak to Emmanuel, (but in such language as the town understood not,) the contents whereof were as follows:

"O thou great Emmanuel, Lord of all the world, I know thee, that thou art the Son of the great Shaddai? Wherefore art thou come to torment me, and to cast me out of my possession? This town of Mansoul, as thou very well knowest, is mine, and that by a twofold right. 1. It is mine by right of conquest; I won it in the open field. And shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive be deliverd? 2. This town of Mansoul is mine also by their subjection. They have opened the gates of their town unto me. They have sworn fidelity to me, and openly chosen me to be their king. They have also given their castle into my hands; yea, they have put the whole strength of Mansoul under me.

"Moreover, this town of Mansoul hath disavowed thee; yea, they have cast thy law, thy name, thy image, and all that is thine, behind their back; and have accepted and set up in their room, my law, my name, my image, and all that ever is mine. Ask else thy captains, and they will tell thee, that Mansoul hath, in answer to all their summons, shewn love and loyalty to me; but always disdain, despite, contempt, and scorn, to thee and thine: Now thou art the Just One, and the holy, (and shouldst do no iniquity,) depart then, I pray thee therefore, from me, and leave me to my just inheritance, peaceably."

This oration was made in the language of Diabolus himself. For although he can, to every man, speak in their own language, (else he could not tempt them all as he does,) yet he has a language proper to himself, and it is the language of the infernal cave, or black pit.

Wherefore the town of Mansoul (poor hearts) understood him not, nor did they see how he crouched and cringed, while he stood before Emmanuel their Prince.

Yea, they all this while took him to be one of that power and force that by no means could be resisted. Wherefore, while

he was thus entreating, that he might have yet his residence there, and that Emmanuel would not take it from him by force, the inhabitants boasted even of his valor, saying, Who is able to make war with him?

Well, then this pretended king had made an end of what he would say, Emmanuel, the golden Prince stood up and spake; the contents of whose words follow;

"Thou deceiving one," said he, "I have in my Father's name, in my own name, and on the behalf and for the good of this wretched town of Mansoul, somewhat to say unto thee. Thou pretendest a right, a lawful right to the deplorable town of Mansoul; when it is most apparent to all my Father's court, that the entrance which thou hast obtained in at the gates of Mansoul, was through thy lies and falsehood. Thou beliedst my Father, and thou beliedst his law, and so deceivedst the people of Mansoul. Thou pretendest that the people have accepted thee for their king, their captain, and right liege-lord; but that also was by the exercise of deceit and guile. Now, if lying, wiliness, sinful craft, and all manner of horrible hypocrisy, will go, in my Father's court,(in which court thou must be tried,) for equity and right, then will I confess unto thee, that thou hast made a lawful conquest. But alas! what thief, what tyrant, what devil is there that may not conquer after this sort? But I can make it appear, O Diabolus, that thou, in all thy pretences to a conquest of Mansoul, hast nothing of truth to say. Thinkest thou this to be right, that thou didst put the lie upon my Father, and madest him to Mansoul the greatest deluder in the world? And what sayest thou, to thy perverting, knowingly, the right purport and intent of the law? Was it good also that thou madest a prey of the innocency and simplicity of the now miserable town of Mansoul? Yea, thou didst overcome Mansoul, by promising to them happiness in their transgressions against my Father's law, when thou knowest, and couldest not but know, hadst thou consulted nothing but thine own experience, that that was the way to undo them. Thou hast also thyself,(O thou master of enmity!) of despite, defaced my Father's image in Mansoul, and set up thy own in its place, to the great contempt of my Father, the heightening of thy sin, and to the intolerable damage of the perishing town of Mansoul.

Thou hast moreover, (as if all these were but little things with thee,) not only deluded and undone this place, but by thy lies and fraudulent carriage hast set them against their own deliverance. How hast thou stirred them up against my Father's captains, and made them to fight against those that were sent of him to deliver them from their bondage! All these things, and very many more, thou hast done against thy light, and in contempt of my Father, and of his law; yea, and with design to bring under his displeasure for ever the miserable town of Mansoul. I am therefore come to avenge the wrong that thou hast done to my Father, and to deal with thee for the blasphemies wherewith thou hast made poor Mansoul blaspheme his name. Yea, upon thy head, thou prince of the infernal cave, will I require it.

As for myself, O Diabolus, I am come against thee by lawful power, and to take by strength of hand this town of Mansoul out of thy burning fingers. For this town of Mansoul is mine, O Diabolus, and that by undoubted right, as all shall see that will diligently search the most ancient and most authentic records; and I will plead my title to it, to the confusion of thy face.

First, For the town of Mansoul, my Father built and did fashion it with his hand. The palace also that is in the midst of that town, he built it for his own delight. This town of Mansoul, therefore, is my Father's, and that by the best of titles: And he that gainsays the truth of this, must lie against his soul.

Secondly, O thou master of the lie, this town of Mansoul is mine.

1. For that I am my Father's heir, his first born, and the only delight of his heart. I am therefore come up against thee in mine own right, even to recover mine own inheritance out of thine hand.

2. But, further: As I have right and title to Mansoul, by being my Father's heir, so I have also by my Father's donation. His it was, and he gave it me; nor have I at any time offended my Father, that he should take it from me, and give it thee. Nor have I been forced, by playing the bankrupt, to sell, or set to sale to thee, my beloved town of Mansoul. Mansoul is my desire, my delight, and the desire of my heart. But,

3. Mansoul is mine by right of purchase. I have bought it, (O Diabolus,) I have bought it to myself. Now, since it was my Father's and mine, as I was his heir, and since also I have made it mine by virtue of a great purchase, it followeth, that by all lawful right the town of Mansoul is mine, and that thou art an usurper, a tyrant and traitor, in thy holding possession thereof. Vow the cause of my purchasing of it was this: Mansoul had trespassed against my Father; now my Father had said, That in the day that they broke his law they should die. Now it is more possible for heaven and earth to pass away, than for my Father to break his word. Wherefore, when Mansoul had sinned indeed, by hearkening to

thy lie, I put in and became a surety to my Father, body for body, and soul for soul, that I would make amends for Mansoul's transgressions; and my Father did accept thereof. So when the time appointed was come, I gave body for body, soul for soul, life for life, blood for blood, and so redeemed my beloved Mansoul.

4. Nor did I do this to the halves; my Father's law and justice, that were both concerned in the threatening upon transgression, are both now satisfied, and very well content that Mansoul should be delivered.

5. Nor am I come out this day against thee, but by commandment of my Father; it was he that said unto me, Go down and deliver Mansoul.

Wherefore be it known unto thee, O thou fountain of deceit, and be it also known to the foolish town of Mansoul, that I am not come against thee this day without my Father.

And now, (said the goldenheaded Prince,) I have a word to the town of Mansoul,"—But as soon as mention was made, that he had a word to speak to the besotted town of Mansoul, the gates were double guarded, and all men commanded not to give him audience: So he proceeded, and said, "O unhappy town of Mansoul, I cannot but be touched with pity and compassion for thee. thou hast accepted of Diabolus for thy King, and art become a nurse and minister of Diabolonians against thy Sovreign Lord. Thy gates thou hast opened to him, but hast shut them fast against me; thou hast given him a hearing, but hast stopped thine ears at my cry; he brought to thee thy destruction, and thou didst receive both him and it; I am come to thee bringing salvation, but thou regardest me not. Besides, thou hast, as with sacrilegious hands, taken thyself, with all that was mine in thee, and hast given all to my foe, and to the greatest enemy my Father has. You have bowed and subjected yourselves to him; you have vowed and sworn yourselves to be his. Poor Mansoul! what shall I do unto thee? Shall I save thee? Shall I destroy thee? What shall I do unto thee? Shall I fall upon thee, and grind thee to powder, or make thee a monument of the richest grace? What shall I do unto thee? Hearken, therefore, thou town of Mansoul; hearken to my word, and thou shalt live. I am merciful, Mansoul, and thou shalt find me so. Shut me not out of thy gates.

O Mansoul! neither is my commission, nor inclination, to do thee any hurt; why fliest thou so fast from thy friend, and stickest so close to thine enemy? Indeed I would have thee, because it becomes thee, to be sorry for thy sin; but do not despair of life, this great force is not to hurt thee. but to deliver thee from thy bondage, and to reduce thee to thy obedience.

My commission indeed is to make a war upon Diabolus thy king, and upon all Diabolonians with him; for he is the strong man armed that keeps the house, and I will have him out; his spoils I must divide, his armor I must take from him, his hold I must cast him out of, and make it an habitation for myself. And this, O Mansoul, shall Diabolus know, when he shall be made to follow me in chains, and when Mansoul shall rejoice to see it so.

I could, would I now put forth my might, cause that forthwith he should leave you and depart; but I have it in my heart so to deal with him, as that the justice of the war that I shall make upon him may be seen and acknowledged by all. He hath taken Mansoul by fraud, and keeps it by violence and deceit, and I will make him bare and naked in the eyes of all observers.

All my words are true; I am mighty to save, and will deliver my Mansoul out of his hand." This speech was intended chiefly for Mansoul, but Mansoul would not have the hearing of it. They shut up Ear-gate, they barricadoed it up, they kept it locked, and bolted; they set a guard thereat, and commanded that no Mansoulian should go out to him, nor that any from the camp should be admitted into the town; All this they did, so horribly had Diabolus enchanted them to do, and seek to do for him, against their rightful Lord and Prince; wherefore no man, nor voice, nor sound of man that belonged to the glorious host, was to come into the town.

So when Emmanuel saw that Mansoul was thus involved in sin, he calls his army together, since now also his words were despised, and gave out a commandment throughout all his host to be ready against the time appointed. Now, forasmuch as there was no way lawfully to take the town of Mansoul, but to get in by the gates, and at Ear-gate as the chief, therefore he commanded his captains and commanders to bring their rams, their slings, and their men, and to place them at Eye-gate and Ear-gate, in order to his taking the town.

When Emmanuel had put all things in a readiness to give Diabolus battle, he sent again to know of the town of Mansoul, if in a peaceable manner they would yield themselves, or whether they were yet resolved to put him to try the utmost extremity. Then they, together with Diabolus their king, called a council of war, and resolved upon certain propositions that should be offered to Emmanuel, if he would accept thereof; so they agreed; and then the next was, who should be sent on this errand. Now there was in the town of Mansoul, an old man, a Diabolian, and his name was Mr. Loth-to-stoop, a stiff man in his way, and a great doer for Diabolus: him there-

fore they sent, and put into his mouth what he should say. So he went and came to the camp to Emmanuel; and when he was come, a time was appointed to give him audience. So at the time he came, and after a Diabolonian ceremony or two, he thus began, and said: "Great Sir, that it may be known unto all men how good-natured a prince my master is, he hath sent me to tell your lordship, that he is very willing, rather than go to war, to deliver up into your hands one half of the town of Mansoul. I am therefore to know if your mightiness will accept of this proposition."

Then said Emmanuel, "The whole is mine by gift and purchase, wherefore I will never lose one half."

Then said Mr. Loth-to-stoop, "Sir, my master hath said, that he will be content that you shall be the nominal and titular Lord of all, if he may possess but a part."

Then Emmanuel answered, "The whole is mine really, not in name and word only: wherefore I will be the sole Lord and possessor of all or of none at all of Mansoul.', Then Mr. Loth-to-stoop said again, "Sir behold the condescension of my master! He say that he will be content, if he may but have assigned to him some place in Mansoul as a place to live privately in, and you shall be Lord of all the rest."

Then said the golden Prince, "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and of all that he hath given me I will lose nothing, no, not a hoof, nor a hair. I will not therefore grant him, no not the least corner in Mansoul to dwell in, I will have all to myself."

Then Loth-to-stoop said again, "But Sir, suppose that my Lord should resign the whole town to you, only with this proviso, that he sometimes, when he comes into this country, may, for old acquaintance sake, be entertained as a wayfaring man for two days, or ten days, or a month, or so; may not then this small matter be granted?"

Then said Emmanuel: "No: He came as a wayfaring man to David, nor did he stay long with him, and yet it had like to have cost David his soul. I will not consent that he ever should have any harbor more there."

Then said Mr. Loth-to-stoop, "Sir, you seem to be very hard. Suppose my master should yield to all that your Lordship hath said, provided that his friends and kindred in Mansoul may have liberty to trade in the town, and to enjoy their present dwellings; may not that be granted Sir?"

Then said Emmanuel, "No; that is contrary to my Father's will; for all, and all manner of Diabolonians that now are, or that at any time shall be found in Mansoul, shall not only lose their lands and liberties, but also their lives."

Then said Mr. Loth-to stoop again, "But Sir, may not my master, and great lord, by letters, by passengers, by accidental opportunities, and the like, maintain, if he shall deliver up all unto thee, some kind of old friendship with Mansoul."

Emmanuel answered, "No, by no means; forasmuch as any such fellowship, friendship, intimacy, or acquaintance, in what way, sort, or mode soever, maintained, will tend to the corrupting of Mansoul, the alienating of their affections from me, and the endangering of their peace with my Father."

Mr. Loth-to-stoop yet added further, saying, But great Sir, since my master hath many friends, and those that are dear to him in Mansoul, may he not, if he shall depart from them, even of his bounty and good nature, bestow upon them, as he sees fit, some tokens of his love and kindness, that he had for them, to the end that Mansoul, when he is gone, may look upon such tokens of kindness once received from their old friend, and remember him who was once their king, and the merry times that they sometimes enjoyed one with another, while he and they lived in peace together?"

Then said Emmanuel, "No; for if Mansoul come to be mine, I shall not admit of, nor consent that there should be the least scrap, shred, or dust of Diabolus left behind, as tokens or gifts bestowed upon any in Mansoul, thereby to call to remembrance the horrible communion that was betwixt them and him."

"Well, sir,"said Mr. Loth-to-stoop,"I have one thing more to propound, and then I am got to the end of my commission: suppose that when my master is gone from Mansoul, any that yet shall live in the town, should have such business of high concerns to do, that if they be neglected, the party shall be undone; and suppose, Sir, that nobody can help, in that case, so well as my master and lord; may not now my master be sent for upon so urgent an occasion as this? Or if he may not be admitted into the town, may not he and the person concerned, meet in some of the villages near Mansoul, and there lay their heads together, and there consult of matters?"

This was the last of those ensnaring propositions that Mr. Loth-to-stoop had to propound to Emmanuel on behalf of his master Diabolus; but Emmanuel would not grant it; for he said, "There can be no case, or thing, or matter, fall out in Mansoul, when thy master shall be gone, that may not be solved by my Father; besides, it will be a great disparagement to my Father's wisdom and skill, to admit any

from Mansoul to go out to Diabolus for advice, when they are bid before, in every thing by prayer and supplication to let their request be made known to my Father. Further, this, should it be granted, would be to grant that a door should be set open for Diabolus and the Diabolonians in Mansoul, to hatch and plot, and bring to pass treasonable designs, to the grief of my Father and me, and to the utter destruction of Mansoul."

When Mr. Loth-to-stoop had heard this answer, he took his leave of Emmanuel, and departed, saying, that he would do his word to his master concerning this whole affair. So he departed and came to Diabolus to Mansoul, and told him the whole of the matter, and how Emmanuel would not admit, no not by any means, that he, when he was once gone out, should for ever have any thing more to do, either in or with any that are of the town of Mansoul.—When Mansoul and Diabolus had heard this relation of things, they with one consent concluded to use their best endeavor to keep Emmanuel out of Mansoul, and sent old Ill-pause, of whom you have heard before, to tell the Prince and his captains so. So the old gentleman came up to the top of Ear-gate, and called to the camp for a hearing; to whom, when they gave audience, he said, I have in commandment from my high lord to bid you to tell it to your Prince Emmanuel, that Mansoul and their king are resolved to stand and fall together, and that it is in vain for your Prince to think of ever having of Mansoul in his hand, unless he can take it by force. So some went and told to Emmanuel what old Ill-pause, a Diabolonian in the town of Mansoul had said. Then said the Prince, I must try the power of my sword, for I will not, for all the rebellions and repulses that Mansoul has made against me, raise my siege and depart, but will assuredly take my Mansoul, and deliver it from the hand of her enemy. And with that he gave out a commandment, that Captain Boanerges, Captain Conviction, Captain Judgment, and Captain Execution, should forthwith march up to Ear-gate, with trumpets sounding, colors flying, and with shouting for the battle. Also he would that Captain Credence should join himself with them. Emmanuel moreover gave orders, that Captain Good-hope and Captain Charity should draw themselves up before Eye-gate. He bid also that the rest of his captains and their men, should place themselves for the best of their advantage against the enemy, round about the town; and all was done as he had commanded. Then he bid that the word should be given forth, and the word was at that time Emmanuel. Then was an alarm sounded, and the battering-rams were played, and the slings did whirl stones into the town amain; and thus the battle began. Now Diabolus himself did manage the townsmen in the war, and that at every gate; wherefore their resistance was the more forcible, hellish, and offensive to Emmanuel. Thus was the good Prince engaged and entertained by Diabolus in Mansoul for several days together. And a sight worth seeing it was, to behold how the captains of Shaddai behaved themselves in this war.

And first for Captain Boanerges, (not to under-value the rest,) he made three most fierce assaults, one after another, upon Ear-gate, to the shaking of the posts thereof. Captain Conviction, he also made up as fast with Boanerges as possibly he could, and both discerning that the gate began to yield, they commanded that the rams should still be played against it. Now Captain Conviction going up very near to the gate, was with very great force driven back, and received three wounds in the mouth. And those that rode reformades, they went about to encourage the captains.

For the valor of the two captains made mention of before, the Prince sent for them to his pavillion, and commanded that awhile they should rest themselves, and that with somewhat they should be refreshed. Care was also taken for Captain Conviction, that he should be healed of his wounds. The Prince also gave to each of them a chain of gold, and bid them yet be of good courage.

Nor did Captain Good-hope, nor Captain Charity come behind in this most desperate fight, for they so well did behave themselves at Eye-gate, that they had almost broken it quite open. These also had a reward from their Prince, as also had the rest of the captains, because they did valiantly around about the town.

In this engagement several of the officers of Diabolus, were slain, and some of the townsmen wounded. For among the officers there was one Captain Boasting slain. This Boasting thought that nobody could have shaken the posts of Ear-gate, nor have shaken the heart of Diabolus. Next to him there was one Captain Secure slain; this Secure used to say, that the blind and lame in Mansoul were able to keep the gates of the town against Emmanuel's army. This Captain Secure did Captain Conviction cleave down the head with a two-handed sword, when he received himself three wounds in his mouth.

Besides these, there was one Captain Bragman, a very desperate fellow, and he was captain over a band of those that threw firebrands, arrows and death; he also received by the hand of Captain Good-hope at Eye-gate, a mortal wound in the breast.

There was moreover one Mr. Feeling, but he was no captain, but a great stickler to encourage Mansoul to rebellion; he received a wound in the eye by the hand of one of Boanerges' soldiers, and had by the Captain himself been slain, but that he made a sudden retreat.

But I never saw Willbewill so daunted in all my life; he was not able to do as he was wont, and some say that he also received a wound in the leg, and that some of the men in the Prince's army have certainly seen him limp, as he afterwards walked on the wall.

I shall not give you a particular account of the names of the soldiers that were slain in the town, for many were maimed, and wounded, and slain: for when they saw that the posts of Ear-gate did shake, and Eye-gate was well nigh broken open; and also that their captains were slain; this took away the hearts of many of the Diabolonians; they fell also by the force of the shot that were sent by the golden slings into the midst of the town of Mansoul.

Of the townsmen, there was one Love-no-good, he was a townsman, but a Diabolonian; he also received his mortal wound in Mansoul, but he died not very soon.

Mr. Ill-pause also, who was the man that came along with Diabolus when at first he attempted the taking of Mansoul; he also received a grievous wound in the head, some say that his brain-pan was cracked; this I have taken notice of, that he was never after this able to do that mischief to Mansoul, as he had done in times past, Also old Prejudice and Mr. Anything fled.

Now when the battle was over, the Prince commanded that yet once more the white flag should be set upon Mount Gracious, in sight of the town of Mansoul; to show that yet Emmanuel had grace for the wretched town of Mansoul.

When Diabolus saw the white flag hanged out again, and knowing that it was not for him, but Mansoul, he cast in his mind to play another prank, to wit, to see if Emmanuel would raise his siege and be gone, upon a promise of reformation. So he comes down to the gate one evening a good, while after the sun was gone down, and calls to speak with Emmanuel, who presently comes down to the gate, and Diabolus said unto him:

"Forasmuch as thou makest it appear by thy white flag, that thou art wholly given to peace and quiet; I thought meet to acquaint thee, that we are ready to accept thereof, upon terms which thou mayest admit.

"I know that thou art given to devotion, and that holiness pleases thee; yea, that thy great end in making war upon Mansoul, is, that it may be an holy habitation. Well draw off thy forces from the town, and I will bend Mansoul to thy bow.

"First; I will lay down all acts of hostility against thee, and will be willing to become thy deputy, and will, as I have formerly been against thee, now serve thee in the town of Mansoul. And more particularly,

"1. I will persuade Mansoul to receive thee for their Lord, and I know, that they will do it sooner, when they shall understand that I am thy deputy.

"2. I will shew them wherein they have erred, and that transgression stands in the way to life.

"3. I will shew them the holy law unto which they must conform, even that which they have broken.

"4. I will press upon them the necessity of a reformation, according to law.

"5. And moreover, that none of these things may fail, I myself, at my own proper cost and charge, will set up and maintain a sufficient ministry, besides lecturers, in Mansoul.

"6. Thou shalt receive as a token of our subjection to thee, continually year by year, what thou shalt think fit to lay and levy upon us, in token of such subjection to thee."

Then said Emmanuel to him, "O full of deceit, how moveable are thy ways! How often hast thou changed and rechanged, if so be thou mightest still keep possession of my Mansoul! though, as has been plainly declared before, I am the right heir thereof! Often hast thou made thy proposals already, nor is this last a whit better than they. And failing to deceive when thou shewedst thyself in thy black, thou hast now transformed thyself into an angel of light, and wouldst, to deceive, be now as a minister of righteousness.

"But know thou, O Diabolus, that nothing must be regarded that thou canst propound, for nothing is done by thee but to deceive; thou neither hast conscience to God, nor love to the town of Mansoul; whence then should these thy sayings arise, but from sinful craft and deceit? He that can list and will propound what he pleases, and that therewith he may destroy them that believe him, is to be abandoned, with all that he shall say. But if righteousness be such a beauty-spot in thine eyes now, how is it that wickedness was so closely stuck to by thee before? But this by the bye.

"Thou talkest now of a reformation in Mansoul, and that thou thyself, if I please, will be at the head of that reformation, all the while knowing, that the greatest proficiency that man can make in the law, and the righteousness thereof, will amount to no more for the taking away of the curse

from Mansoul, than just nothing at all; for a law being broken by Mansoul, that had before, upon a supposition of the breach thereof, a curse pronounced against him for it of God, can never, by his obeying the law, deliver himself therefrom, (to say nothing of what, a reformation is like to be set up in Mansoul, when the devil is become the corrector of vice.) Thou knowest that all thou hast now said in this matter is nothing but guile and deceit, and is as it was the first, so is it the last card that thou hast to play. Many there be that discern thee when thou showest them thy cloven foot; but in thy white, thy light, and in thy transformation, thou art seen but of a few. But thou shalt not do thus with my Mansoul, O Diabolus, for I do still love my Mansoul.

"Besides, I am not come to put Mansoul upon works to live thereby, (should I do so, I should be like unto thee,) but I am come, that by me, and by what I have and shall do for Mansoul, they may to my Father be reconciled, though by their sin they have provoked him to anger, and though by the law they cannot obtain mercy.

"Thou talkest of subjecting this town to good, when none desireth it at thy hands. I am sent by my Father to possess it myself, and to guide it by the skilfulness of my hands into such a conformity to him as shall be pleasing in his sight. I will therefore possess it myself. I will dispossess and cast thee out. I will set up mine own standard in the midst of them. I will also govern them by new laws, new officers, new motives, and new ways; yea, I will pull down this town, and build it again, and it shall be as though it had not been, and it shall be the glory of the whole universe."

When Diabolus heard this and perceived that he was discoverd in all his deceits, he was confounded, and utterly put to a nonplus; but having in himself the fountain of iniquity, rage, and malice, against both Shaddai and his Son, and the beloved town of Mansoul, what doth he, but strengthen himself what he could to give fresh battle to the noble Prince Emmanuel! So then, now we must have another fight before the town of Mansoul is taken. Come up then to the mountains, you that love to see military actions, and behold by both sides how the fatal blow is given; while one seeks to hold, and the other seeks to make himself master of the famous town of Mansoul.

Diabolus therefore withdrew himself from the walls to his fort that was in the heart of the town of Mansoul; Emmanual also returned to the camp; and both of them, after their divers ways, put themselves into a posture fit to give battle one to another.

Diabolus, as filled with despair of retaining in his hands the famous town of Mansoul, resolved to do what mischief he could (if indeed he could do any) to the army of the Prince, and to the famous town of Mansoul, (for alas! it was not the happiness of the silly town of Mansoul that was designed by Diabolus, but the utter ruin and overthrow thereof,) as now is enough in view. Wherefore he commands his officers, that they should then, when they saw that they could hold the town no longer, do it what harm and mischief they could, rending and tearing men, women and children. For, said he, we had better quite demolish the place and leave it a ruinous heap, than that it should be an habitation for Emmanuel.

Emmanuel, again konwing that the next battle would issue in his being made master of the place, gave out a royal commandment to all his officers, high captains, and men of war, to be sure and shew themselves men of war against Diabolus, and all Diabolonians; but favourable, merciful and meek to all the old inhabitants of Mansoul. Bend therefore, said the noble Prince, the hottest front of the battle against Diabolus and his men.

So the day being come, the command was given, and the Prince's men did bravely stand to their arms, and did, as before, bend their forces against Ear-gate. and Eye-gate. The word was then, 'Mansoul is won.' So they made their assault upon the town. Diabolus, also, as fast as he could; with the main of his power, made resistance from within, and his high lords and chief captains for a time fought very cruelly against the Prince's army.

But after three or four notable charges by the Prince and his noble captains, Eargate was broken open, and the bars and bolts wherewith it was used to be fast shut up against the Prince, were broken into a thousand pieces. Then did the Prince's trumpets sound, the captains shout, the town shake, and Diabolus retreat to his hold. Well, when the Prince's forces had broken open the gate, himself came up, and did set up his throne in it; also he set his standard upon a mount that his men had before cast up to place the mighty slings thereon. The mount was called Mount Hear-well; there, therefore, the Prince abode, to wit hard by the going in at the gate. He commanded also that the golden slings should yet be played upon the town, especially against the castle, because for shelter thither was Diabolus retreated. Now from Ear-gate the street was straight, even to the house of him who was the Recorder, before Diabolus took the town; and hard by his house stood the castle, which Diabolus for a long time had made his irksome den. The captains therefore did quickly clear that street by the use of

their slings, so that way was made up to the heart of the town. Then did the Prince command that Captain Boanerges, Captain Conviction, and Captain Judgment, should forthwith march up the town to the old gentleman's gate. Then did the captains in most warlike manner enter into the town of Mansoul, and marching in with flying colours, they came up to the Recorder's house, (and that was almost as strong as the castle.) Battering-rams they took also with them to plant against the castle gates. When they were come to the house of Mr. Conscience, they knocked and demanded entrance. Now the old gentleman, not knowing as yet fully their design, kept his gates shut all the time of this fight. Wherefore Boanerges demanded entrance at his gates, and no man making answer, he gave it one stroke with the head of a ram, and this made the old gentleman to shake, and his house to tremble and totter. Then came Mr. Recorder down to the gate, and as well as he could, with quivering lips, he asked, Who was there? Boanerges answered, We are the captains and commanders of the great Shaddai, and of the blessed Emmanuel his Son, and we demand possession of your house for the use of our noble Prince. And with that the battering-ram gave the gate another shake; this made the old gentleman tremble the more, yet he durst not but open the gate: then the King's forces marched in, namely, the three brave captains mentioned before. Now the Recorder's house was a place of much convenience for Emmanuel, not only because it was near to the castle, and strong, but also because it was large and fronted the castle, the den where now Diabolus was; for he was now afraid to come out of his hold. As for Mr. Recorder, the captains carried it very reservedly to him; as yet he knew nothing of the great designs of Emmanuel: so that he did not know what judgment to make, nor what would be the end of such thundering beginnings. If was also noised in the town, how the Recorder's house was possessed, his rooms taken up, and his palace made the seat of war; and no sooner was it noised abroad, but they took the alarm as warmly, and gave it out to others of his friends; (and as you know a snowball loses nothing by rolling,) so in little time the whole town was possessed, that they must expect nothing from the Prince but destruction; and the ground of the business was this: The Recorder was afraid, the Recorder trembled, and the captains carried it strangely to the Recorder. So many came to see; but when they with their own eyes did behold the captains in the palace, and their battering-rams ever playing at the castle-gates to beat them down, they were riveted in their fears, and it made them all in amaze. And, as I said, the man of the house would increase all this; for, whoever came to him, or discoursed with him, nothing would he talk of, tell them, or hear, but that death and destruction now attended Mansoul.

For, quoth the old gentleman, you are all of you sensible that we all have been traitors to that once despised, but now famously victorious and glorious Prince Emmanuel. For he now, as you see, doth not only lie in close siege about us, but hath forced his entrance in at our gates: morover Diabolus flies before him, and he hath, as you behold, made of my house a garrison against the castle where he is. I, for my part, have transgressed greatly, (and he that is clean it is well for him.) But, I say, I have transgressed greatly in keeping silence when I should have spoken; and in perverting justice when I should have executed the same. True, I have suffered something at the hands of Diabolus, for taking part with the laws of King Shaddai; but that, alas! what will that do? Will that make compensation for the rebellions and treasons that I have done, and have suffered without gainsaying, to be committed in the town of Mansoul? O I tremble to think, what will be the end of this so dreadful and so ireful a beginning?

Now while these brave captains were thus busy in the house of the old Recorder, Captain Execution was as busy in other parts of the town, in securing the back streets, and the walls. He also hunted the Lord Willbewill sorely, and suffered him not to rest in any corner. He pursued him so hard, that he drove his men from him, and made him glad to thrust his head into a hole. Also this mighty warrior did cut three of the Lord Willbewill's officers down to the ground; one was old Mr. Prejudice, he that had his crown cracked in the mutiny; this man was made by my Lord Willbewill keeper of Ear-gate, and fell by the hand of Captain Execution. There was also one Mr. Backward-to-all-but-naught, and he also was one of Lord Willbewill's officers, and was the captain of the two guns that once were mounted on the top of Ear-gate; he also was cut down to the ground by the hands of Captain Execution. Besides these two there was another, a third, and his name was Captain Treacherous, a vile man this was, but one that Willbewill did put a great deal of confidence in; but him also did this Captain Execution cut down to the ground with the rest.

He also made a very great slaughter among my Lord Willbewill's soldiers, killing many that were stout and sturdy, and

wounding of many that for Diabolus were nimble and active. But all these were Diabolonians, there was not a man, a native of Mansoul hurt.

Other feats of war were also likewise performed by other of the captains, as at Eye-gate where Captain Good-hope and Captain Charity had a charge, was great execution done; for Captain Good-hope with his own hand slew one Captain Blindfold, the keeper of that gate; this Blindfold was captain of a thousand men, and they were they that fought with mauls; he also pursued his men, slew many, and wounded more, and made the rest hide their heads in corners.

There was also at that gate, Mr. Illpause, of whom you have heard before; he was an old man, and had a beard that reached down to his girdle; the same was he that was orator to Diabolus: he did much mischief in the town of Mansoul, and fell by the hand of Captain Goodhope.

What shall I say, the Diabolonians in these days lay dead in every corner, though too many were yet alive in Mansoul.

Now the old Recorder, and my Lord Understanding, with some others of the chief of the town, to wit, such as knew they must stand or fall with the famous town of Mansoul, came together upon a day; and, after consultation had, did jointly agree to draw up a petition, and to send it to Emmanuel, now while he sat in the gate of Mansoul. So they drew up their petition to Emmanuel, the contents whereof were these: "that they, the old inhabitants of the deplorable town of Mansoul confessed their sin, and were sorry that they had offended his princely Majesty, and prayed that he would spare their lives.

Upon this petition he gave no answer at all, and that did trouble them yet so much the more. Now all this while the captains that were in the Recorder's house were playing with the battering-rams at the gates of the castle to beat them down. So after some time, labor, and travail, the gate of the castle that was called Impregnable was beaten open, and broken into several splinters; and so a way made to go up to the hold in which Diabolus had hid himself. Then were tidings sent down to Ear-gate, for Emmanuel still abode there, to let him know that a way was made in at the gates of the castle of Mansoul. But oh! how the trumpets at the tidings sounded throughout the Prince's camp, for that now the war was so near an end, and Mansoul itself of being set free.

Then the Prince arose from the place where he was, and took with him such of his men of war as were fittest for the expedition, and marched up the street of Mansoul to the old Recorder's house.

Now the Prince himself was clad all in armor of gold, and so he marched up the town with his standard borne before him; but he kept his countenance much reserved all the way as he went, so that the people could not tell how to gather to themselves love or hatred by his looks. Now as he marched up the street, the townsfolk came out at every door to see, and could not but be taken with his person, and the glory thereof, but wondered at the reservedness of his countenance; for as he yet spake more to them by his actions and works, than he did by words or smiles. But also poor Mansoul, (as in such cases all are apt to do,) interpreted the carriage of Emmanuel to them, as did Joseph's brethren his to them, even all the quite contrary way; for thought they, if Emmanuel loved us, he would show it to us by word or carriage, but none of these he doth, therefore Emmanuel hates us. Now if Emmanuel hates us, Mansoul shall be slain, then Mansoul shall become a dunghill. They knew that they had transgressed his Father's law, and that against him they had been in league with Diabolus his enemy. They also knew that the Prince Emmanuel knew all this; for they were convinced that he was an angel of God, to know all things that are done in the earth. And this made them think that their condition was miserable, and that the good Prince would make them desolate.

And, thought they, what time so fit to do this in as now, when he has the bridle of Mansoul in his hand. And this I took special notice of, that the inhabitants (notwithstanding all this) could not, no, they could not, when they saw him march through the town, but cringe, bow, bend, and were ready to lick the dust off his feet. They also wished a thousand times over, that he would become their Prince and captain, and would become their protector. They would also one to another talk of the comeliness of his person, and how much for glory and valor he outstripped the great ones of the world. But, poor hearts, as to themselves, their thoughts would change and go upon all manner of extremes; yea, through the working of them backward and forward, Mansoul became as a ball tossed, and as a rolling thing before the whirlwind.

Now when he was come to the castle-gates, he commanded Diabolus to appear, and to surrender himself into his hands. But oh! how loth was the beast to appear! How he stuck at it! How he shrunk! How he cringed! Yet out he came to the Prince. Then Emmanuel commanded, and they took Diabolus and bound him fast in chains, the better to reserve him to the judgment that he had appointed for him:

But Diabolus stood up to entreat for himself, that Emmanuel would not send him into the deep, but suffer him to depart out of Mansoul in peace.

When Emmanuel had taken him, and bound him in chains, he led him into the market-place, and there, before Mansoul, stripped him of his armor in which he boasted so much before. This now was one of the acts of triumph of Emmanuel over his enemy; and all the while that the giant was stripping, the trumpets of the golden Prince did sound amain; the captains also shouted, and the soldiers did sing for joy.

Then was Mansoul called upon to behold the beginning of Emmanuel's triumph over him in whom they so much had trusted, and of whom they so much had boasted in the days when he had flattered them.

Thus having made Diabolus naked in the eyes of Mansoul, and before the commanders of the Prince; in the next place he commands, that Diabolus should be bound with chains to his chariot wheels. Then leaving some of his forces, to wit, Captain Boanerges, and Captain Conviction, as a guard for the castle-gates, that resistance might be made on his behalf, (if any that heretofore followed Diabolus should make an attempt to possess it,) he did ride in triumph over him quite through the town of Mansoul, and so out at and before the gate called Eye-gate, to the plain where was his camp.

But you cannot think, unless you had been there, as I was, what a shout there was in Emmanuel's camp when they saw the tyrant bound by the hand of their noble Prince, and tied to his chariot wheels!

And they said, He hath led captivity captive; he hath spoiled principalities and powers; Diabolus is subjected to the power of his sword, and made the object of all derision!

Those also that rode reformades, and that came down to see the battle, they shouted with that greatness of voice, and sung with such melodious notes, that they caused them that dwell in the highest orbs to open their windows, put out their heads, and look down to see the cause of that glory.

The townsmen also, so many of them as saw this sight, were as it were astonished, while they looked betwixt the earth and the heavens. True, they could not tell what would be the issue of things as to them, but all things were done in such excellent methods: and I cannot tell how, but things in the management of them seemed to cast a smile towards the town; so that their eyes, their heads, their hearts, and their minds, and all that they had, were taken and held, while they observed Emmanuel's order.

So when the brave Prince had finished this part of his triumph over Diabolus his foe, he turned him up in the midst of his contempt and shame, having given him a charge no more to be a possessor of Mansoul. Then went he from Emmanuel, and out of the midst of his camp, to inherit the parched places in a salt land, seeking rest but finding none.

Now Captain Boanerges, and Captain Conviction, were both of them men of very great majesty, their faces were like the faces of lions, and their words like the roaring of the sea; and they still quartered in Mr. Conscience's house, of whom mention was made before.—When therefore the high and mighty Prince had thus far finished his triumph over Diabolus, the townsmen had more leisure to view and to behold the actions of these noble captains. But the captains carried it with that terror and dread in all that they did, (and you may be sure that they had private instructions so to do,) that they kept the town under continual heart-aching, and caused (in their apprehension) the well-being of Mansoul for the future, to hang in doubt before them, so that (for some considerable time) they neither knew what rest, or ease, or peace, or hope meant.

Nor did the Prince himself as yet, abide in the town of Mansoul, but in his royal pavillion in the camp, and in the midst of his Father's forces. So at a time convenient, he sent special orders to Captain Boanerges to summons Mansoul, the whole of the townsmen, into the castle-yard, and then and there before their faces, to take my Lord Understanding, Mr. Conscience, and that notable one the Lord Will-bewill, and put them all three in ward, and that they should set a strong guard upon them there, until his pleasure concerning them were further known. The which orders, when the captains had put in execution, made no small addition to the fears of the town of Mansoul; for now, to their thinking, were their former fears of the ruin of Mansoul confirmed. Now, what death they should die, and how long they should be in dying, was that which most perplexed their heads and hearts: yea, they were afraid that Emmanuel would command them all into the deep, the place that the Prince Diabolus was afraid of; for they knew that they had deserved it: also to die by the sword, in the face of the town and in the open way of disgrace, from the hand of so good and so holy a Prince, that too troubled them sore. The town was also greatly troubled for the men that were committed to ward, for that they were their stay and their guide, and for that they believed, that if those men were cut off, their execution would be but

the beginning of the ruin of the town of Mansoul. Wherefore, what do they, but together with the men in prison, draw up a petition to the Prince, and send it to Emmanuel by the hand of Mr. Would-live. So he went and came to the Prince's quarters, and presented the petition; the sum of which was this: "Great and wonderful potentate, victor over Diabolus, and conquerer of the town of Mansoul: We the miserable inhabitants of that most woful corporation, do humbly beg that we may find favor in thy sight, and remember not against us former transgressions, nor yet the sins of the chief of our town, but spare us according to the greatness of thy mercy, and let us not die, but live in thy sight; so shall we be willing to be thy servants, and if thou shalt think fit, to gather our meat under thy table. Amen."

So the petitioner went, as was said, with this petition to the Prince, and the Prince took it at his hand, but sent him away with silence.—This still afflicted the town of Mansoul; but yet considering that now they must either petition or die, for now they could not do anything else, therefore they consulted again, and sent another petition, and this petition was much after the form and method of the former.

But when the petition was drawn up, by whom should they send it, was the next question; for they would not send this by him, by whom they sent the first, (for they thought that the Prince had taken some offence at the manner of his deportment before him,) so they attempted to make Captain Conviction their messenger with it; but he said, That he neither durst nor would petition Emmanuel for traitors; nor be to the prince an advocate for rebels.—Yet withal, said he, our Prince is good, and you may adventure to send it by the hand of one of your town, provided he went with a rope about his head and pleaded nothing but mercy.

Well, they made through fear their delays as long as they could, and longer than delays were good; but fearing at last the dangerousness of them, they thought, but with many a fainting in their minds, to send their petition by Mr. Desires-awake; so they sent for Mr. Desires-awake; now he dwelt in a very mean cottage in Mansoul, and he came at his neighbors' request. So they told him what they had done, and what they would do concerning petitioning, and that they did desire of him that he would go therewith to the Prince.

Then said Mr. Desires-awake, "Why should not I do the best I can to save so famous a town as Mansoul from deserved destruction?" They therefore delivered the petition to him, and told him how he must address himself to the Prince, and wished him ten thousand good speeds. So he comes to the Prince's pavillion, as the first, and asked to speak with his Majesty; so word was carried to Emmanuel, and the Prince came out to the man. When Mr. Desires-awake saw the Prince, he fell flat with his face to the ground, and cried out, "O that Mansoul might live before thee!" And with that he presented the petition. The which when the Prince had read, he turned away for awhile and wept, but refraining himself, he turned again to the man, (who all this while lay crying at his feet as at the first,) and said, "Go thy way to thy place, and I will consider of thy requests."

Now you may think that they of Mansoul that had sent him, what with guilt, and what with fear, lest their petition should be rejected, could not but look with many a long look, and that too with many strange workings of heart, to see what would become of their petition; at last they saw their messenger coming back; so when he was come, they asked him how he fared, what Emmanuel said, and what was become of the petition? But he told them that he would be silent till he came to the prison to my Lord Mayor, my Lord Willbewill, and Mr. Recorder. So he went forward towards the prison-house, where the men of Mansoul lay bound. But oh! what a multitude flocked after to hear what the messenger said. So when he was come and had shown himself at the grate of the prison, my Lord Mayor himself looked as white as a clout, the Recorder also did quake: but they asked and said, "Come, good Sir, what did the great Prince say to you?" Then said Mr. Desires-awake, "When I came to my Lord's pavilion, I called, and he came forth; so I fell prostrate at his feet, and delivered to him my petition, (for the greatness of his person, and the glory of his countenance would not suffer me to stand upon my legs.) Now as he received the petition, I cried O that Mansoul might still live before thee! So when for a while he had looked thereon, he turned him about and said to his servant, 'Go thy way to thy place again, and I will consider of thy requests.'" Then the messenger added, moreover, and said, "The Prince to whom you sent me is such a one for beauty and glory, that whoso sees him must both love and fear him: I, for my part, can do no less; but I know not what will be the end of these things." At this answer they were all at a stand; both they in prison, and they that followed the messenger thither to hear the news; nor knew they what, or what manner of interpretation to put upon what the prince had said. Now when the prison was cleared of the throng, the prisoners among themselves began to comment upon Emmanuels words.

My Lord Mayor said, that the answer did not look with a rugged face; but Willbewill said, it betokened evil; and the Recorder, that it was a messenger of death. Now they that were left, and that stood behind, and so could not so well hear what the prisoners said, some of them catched hold of one piece of a sentence, and some on a bit of another; some took hold of what the messenger said, and some of the prisoner's judgment thereon; so none had the right understanding of things; but you cannot imagine what work these people made, and what a confusion there was in Mansoul now.

For presently they that had heard what was said, flew about the town; one crying one thing and another the quite contrary, and both were sure enough they told true; for they did hear, they said, with their ears what was said, and therefore could not be deceived. One would say, "We must all be killed;" another would say, "We must all be saved;" and a third would say, "That the prince would not be concerned with Mansoul;" and a fourth, "That the prisoners must be suddenly put to death." And as I said, every one stood to it, that he told his tale the rightest, and that all others but he were out. Wherefore Mansoul had now molestation upon molestation; nor could any man know on what to rest the soul of his foot; for one would go by now, and as he went, if he heard his neighbour tell his tale, to be sure he would tell the quite contrary, and both would stand in it that he told the truth. Nay some of them had got this story by the end, "That the Prince did intend to put Mansoul to the sword." And now it began to be dark; wherefore poor Mansoul was in sad perplexity all that night until the morning.

But so far as I could gather by the best information that I could get, all this hubbub came through the words that the Recorder said, when he told them, that in his judgment, the Prince's answer was a messenger of death. It was this that fired the town, and that began the fright in Mansoul; for Mansoul, in former times did use to count that Mr. Recorder was a seer; and that his sentence was equal to the best of oracles; and thus was Mansoul a terror to itself.

And now did they begin to feel what was the effects of stubborn rebellion, and unlawful resistance against their Prince. I say they now began to feel the effects thereof by guilt and fear, that now had swallowed them up; and who more involved in the one, but they that were most in the other; to wit, the chief of the town of Mansoul.

To be brief, when the fame of the fright was out of the town, and the prisoners had a little recovered themselves, they take to themselves some heart, and think to petition the Prince for life again. So they did draw up a third petition, the contents whereof were these:

"Prince Emmanuel the Great, Lord of all worlds, and Master of mercy, we, thy poor, wretched, miserable, dying town of Mansoul do confess unto thy great and glorious Majesty, that we have sinned against thy Father and thee, and are no more worthy to be called thy Mansoul, but rather to be cast into the pit. If thou wilt slay us, we have deserved it. If thou wilt condemn us to the deep, we cannot but say thou art righteous. We cannot complain whatever thou dost, or however thou carriest it towards us. But, oh, let mercy reign! and let it be extended to us! O let mercy take hold upon us, and free us from our transgressions, and we will sing of thy mercy and of thy judgment. Amen."

This petition, when drawn up, was de signed to be sent to the Prince, as the first; but who should carry it, that was the question. Some said, "Let him do it that went with the first;" but others thought not good to do that, and that because he sped no better. Now there was an old man in the town, and his name was Mr. Good-deed, a man that bare only the name, but had nothing of the nature of the thing; now some were for sending him, but the Recorder was by no means for that; For, said he, we now stand in need of, and are pleading for mercy; wherefore to send our petition by a man of this name, will seem to cross the petition itself: Should we make Mr. Good-deed our messenger, when our petition cries for mercy?

"Besides," quoth the old gentleman, "should the Prince now as he receives the petition, ask him and say, What is thy name? as nobody knows but he will, and he should say, Old Good-deed; what think you would Emmanuel say but this? Aye! Is old Good-deed yet alive in Mansoul? Then let old Good-deed save you from your distress. And if he says so, I am sure we are lost; nor can a thousand of old Good-deeds save Mansoul."

After the Recorder had given in his reasons why old Good-deed should not go with this petition to Emmanuel, the rest of the prisoners, and chief of Mansoul, opposed it also; and so old Good-deed was laid aside, and they agreed to send Mr. Desires-awake again; so they sent for him, and desired him that he would a second time go with their petition to the Prince; and he readily told them he would. But they bid him that in anywise he would take heed that in no word or carriage, he gave offence to the Prince; for by doing so, for aught we can tell, you may bring Mansoul into utter destruction said they.

Now Mr. Desires-awake, when he saw

that he must go of this errand, besought that they would grant that Mr. Wet-eyes might go with him. Now this Wet-eyes was a near neighbor of Mr. Desires, a poor man, a man of a broken spirit, yet one that could speak well to a petition. So they granted that he should go with him. Wherefore they addressed themselves to their business: Mr. Desires put a rope upon his head, and Mr. Wet-eyes went with his hands wringing together. Thus they went to the Prince's pavilion.

Now when they went to petition this third time, they were not without thoughts that by often coming they might be a burden to the Prince. Wherefore, when they were come to the door of his pavilion, they first made their apology for themselves, and for their coming to trouble Emmanuel so often; and they said, that they came not hither to-day, for that they delighted in being troublesome, or for that they delighted to hear themselves talk, but for that necessity caused them to come to his Majesty; they could, they said, have no rest day nor night, because of their transgressions against Shaddai, and against Emmanuel his Son. They also thought, that some misbehaviour of Mr. Desires-awake the last time, might give distaste to his highness, and so caused that he returned from so merciful a prince empty, and without countenance. So when they had made this apology, Mr. Desires-awake cast himself prostrate upon the ground as at first, at the feet of the mighty Prince, saying, "Oh, that Mansoul might live before thee!" and so he delivered his petition. The Prince then having read the petition, turned aside awhile as before, and coming again to the place where the petitioner lay on the ground, he demanded what his name was, and of what esteem in the account of Mansoul, for that he, above all the multitude of Mansoul, should be sent to him upon such an errand? Then said the man to the Prince, "O let not my Lord be angry; and why inquirest thou after the name of such a dead dog as I am? Pass by, I pray thee, and take no notice of who I am, because there is, as thou very well knowest, so great a disproportion between me and thee. Why the townsmen chose to send me on this errand to my Lord, is best known to themselves; but it could not be, for that they thought I had favor with my Lord. For my part, I am out of charity with myself, who then should be in love with me? Yet live I would, and so would I that my townsmen should; and because both they and myself are guilty of great transgressions, therefore they have sent me, and I am come in their names, to beg of my Lord for mercy. Let it please thee therefore to incline to mercy, but ask not what thy servants are."

Then said the Prince, "And what is he that is become thy companion in so weighty a matter?" So Mr. Desires told Emmanuel, that he was a poor neighbor of his and one of his most intimate associates, and his name, said he, may it please your most excellent Majesty, is Wet-eyes, of the town of Mansoul. I know that there are many of that name that are nought; but I hope it will be no offence to my Lord that I have brought my poor neighbour with me.

Then Mr. Wet-eyes fell on his face to the ground, and made this apology for his coming with his neighbor to my Lord.

"O my Lord, (quoth he,) what I am I know not myself, nor whether my name be feigned or true, especially when I begin to think what some have said, namely That this name was given me because Mr. Repentance was my father. Good men have bad children, and the sincere do oftentimes beget hypocrites. My mother also called me by this name from my cradle, but whether because of the moistness of my brain, or because of the softnesss of my heart, I cannot tell. I see dirt in mine own tears and filthiness in the bottom of my prayers. But I pray thee, (and all this while the gentleman wept,) that thou wouldst not remember against us our transgressions, nor take offence at the unqualifiedness of thy servants, but mercifully pass by the sin of Mansoul, and refrain from the glorifying of thy grace no longer."

So at his bidding they arose, and both stood trembling before him, and he spake to them to this purpose:

"The town of Mansoul hath grievously rebelled against my Father, in that they have rejected him from being their King, and did choose to themselves for their captain, a liar, a murderer, and a runagate slave. For this Diabolus, and your pretended prince, though one so highly accounted of by you, made rebellion against my Father and me, even in our palace, and the highest court there, thinking to become a prince and king. But being there timely discovered and apprehended, and for his wickedness bound in chains, and separated to the pit with those that were his companions, he offered himself to you, and you have received him.

"Now this is, and for a long time hath been, an high affront to my Father; wherefore my Father sent to you a powerful army to reduce you to your obedience. But you know how those men, their captains, and their counsels, were esteemed of you, and what they received at your hand. You rebelled against them, you shut your gates upon them, you bid them battle, you fought them, and fought for Diabolus against them. So they sent to my Father for more power, and I with my men am come

to subdue you. But as you treated the servants so you treated their Lord. You stood up in hostile manner against me; you shut up your gates against me; you turned a deaf ear to me, and resisted as long as you could; but now I have made a conquest of you. Did you cry me mercy so long as you had hopes that you might prevail against me? But now I have taken the town, you cry: but why did you not cry before, when the white flag of mercy, and the red flag of justice, and the black flag that threatened execution, were set up to cite you to it? Now I have conquered your Diabolus, you come to me for favor; but why did you not help me against the mighty? Yet I will consider your petition, and will answer it so as will be for my glory.

"Go bid Captain Boanerges and Captain Conviction bring the prisoners out to me into the camp to-morrow; and say you to Captain Judgment and Captain Execution, Stay you in the castle, and take good heed to yourselves, that you keep all quiet in Mansoul until you shall hear further from me." And with that he turned himself from them, and went to his royal pavilion again.

So the petitioners having received this answer from the Prince, returned as at the first, to go to their companions again. But they had not gone far, but thoughts began to work in their minds' that no mercy as yet was intended by the Prince to Mansoul. So they went to the place where the prisoners lay bound; but these workings of mind, about what would become of Mansoul, had such strong power over them, that by that they were come unto them that sent them, they were scarce able to deliver their message.

But they came at length to the gates of the town, (now the townsmen with earnestness were waiting for their return,) where many met them to know what answer was made to the petition. Then they cried out to those that were sent, "What news from the Prince? and what hath Emmanuel said?" But they said, that they must, as before, go up to the prison, and there deliver their message. So away they went to the prison with a multitude at their heels. Now, when they were come to the gates of the prison, they told the first part of Emmanuel's speech to the prisoners; to wit, how he reflected upon their disloyalty to his Father and himself, and how they had chose and closed with Diabolus, had fought for him, hearkened to him, and been ruled by him; but had despised him and his men. This made the prisoners look pale; but the messengers proceeded, and said, "He, the Prince, said moreover, that yet he would consider your petition, and give such answer thereto as would stand with his glory. And as these words were spoken, Mr. Wet-eyes gave a great sigh. At this they were all of them struck into their dumps and could not tell what to say. Fear also so possessed them in a marvelous manner; and death seemed to sit upon some of their eye-brows. Now, there was in the company a notable sharp-witted fellow, a mean man of estate, and his name was old Inquisitive; this man asked the petitioners if they had told out every whit of what Emmanuel said. And they answered, "Verily, no." Then said Inquisitive, "I thought so indeed. Pray what was it more that he said unto you?" Then they paused awhile; but at last they brought out all, saying, "The Prince ordered us to bid Captain Boanerges and Captain Conviction bring the prisoners down to him to-morrow; and that Captain Judgment and Captain Execution should take charge of the castle and town till they should hear further from him." They said also, that when the Prince had commanded them thus to do, he immediately turned his back upon them, and went into his royal pavilion.

But O how this return, and especially this last clause of it, that the prisoners must go out to the Prince into the camp, broke all their loins in pieces! Wherefore with one voice, they set up a cry that reached up to the heavens. This done, each of the three prepared himself to die, (and the Recorder said unto them, "This was the thing that I feared,") for they concluded that to-morrow, by that the sun went down, they should be tumbled out of the world. The whole town also counted of no other, but that in their time and order they must all drink of the same cup. Wherefore the town of Mansoul spent that night in mourning, and sackcloth, and ashes. The prisoners also, when the time was come for them to go down before the Prince, dressed themselves in mourning attire, with ropes upon their heads. The whole town of Mansoul also showed themselves upon the wall, all clad in mourning weeds, if perhaps the Prince with the sight thereof might be moved with compassion. But, oh! how the busybodies that were in the town of Mansoul did now concern themselves! They ran here and there through the streets of the town by companies, crying out, as they run in tumultuous wise, one after one manner, and another the quite contrary, to the almost utter distraction of Mansoul.

Well the time is come that the prisoners must go down to the camp, and appear before the Prince. And thus was the manner of their going down: Captain Boanerges went with a guard before them, and Captain Conviction came behind, and the prisoners went down bound in chains in the midst; so I say the prisoners went in the midst, and the guard went with flying col-

ors behind and before, but the prisoners went with drooping spirits.

Or more particularly, thus:

The prisoners went down all in mourning; they put ropes upon themselves; they went on smiting of themselves on the breast, but durst not lift up their eyes to heaven. Thus they went out at the gate of Mansoul, till they came into the midst of the Prince's army, the sight and glory of which did greatly heighten their affliction. Nor could they now longer forbear, but cry out aloud, O unhappy men! O wretched men of Mansoul! Their chains, still mixing their dolorous notes with the cries of the prisoners, made the noise more lamentable.

So when they were come to the door of the Prince's pavilion, they cast themselves prostrate upon the place. Then one went in and told the Lord that the prisoners were come down. The Prince then ascended a throne of state, and sent for the prisoners in; who when they came, did tremble before him; also they covered their faces with shame. Now as they drew nearer to the place where he sat, they threw themselves down before him. Then said the Prince to the Captain Boanerges, Bid the prisoners stand upon their feet. They then stood trembling before him; and he said, Are you the men that heretofore were the servants of Shaddai? And they said, Yes Lord, yes. Then said the Prince again, Are you the men that did suffer yourselves to be corrupted and defiled by that abominable one Diabolus? And they said, We did more than suffer it, Lord; for we chose it of our own mind. The Prince asked further, saying, Could you have been content that your slavery should have continued under his tyranny as long as you have lived? Then said the prisoners, yes, Lord, yes; for his ways were pleasing to our flesh, and we were grown aliens to a better state. And did you, said he, when I came up against this town of Mansoul heartily wish that I might not have the victory over you? Yes, Lord, yes, said they. Then said the Prince, and what punishment is it, think you, that you deserve at my hand, for these and other your high and mighty sins? And they said, Both death and the deep, Lord for we have deserved no less. He asked again, if they had ought to say for themselves, why the sentence that they confessed that they had deserved should not be passed upon them? And they said, We can say nothing, Lord; thou art just, for we have sinned. Then said the Prince, And for what are these ropes on your heads? The prisoners answered, These ropes are to bind us withal to the place of execution, if mercy be not pleasing in thy sight. So he further asked. If all the men in the town of Mansoul were in this confession as they? and they answered, All the natives Lord; but for the Diabolonians that came into our town when the tyrant got possession of us, we can say nothing of them.

Then the Prince commanded that an herald should be called, and that he should in the midst, and throughout the camp of Emmanuel, proclaim, and that with sound of trumpet, that the Prince, the Son of Shaddai, had in his Father's name, and for his Father's glory, gotten a perfect conquest and victory over Mansoul, and that the prisoners should follow him, and say; Amen. So this was done as he had commanded. And presently the music that was in the upper regions sounded melodiously. The captains that were in the camp shouted, and the soldiers did sing songs of triumph to the Prince, the colors waved in the wind, and great joy was every where, only it was wanting as yet in the hearts of the men of Mansoul.

Then the Prince called for the prisoners to come and to stand again before him; and they came and stood trembling. And he said unto them, The sins, trespasses, iniquities, that you, with the whole town of Mansoul, have from time to time committed against my Father and me, I have power and commandment from my Father to forgive to the town of Mansoul; and do forgive you accordingly. And having so said, he gave them written in parchment, and sealed with several seals, a large and general pardon, commanding both my Lord-Mayor, my Lord Willbewill, and Mr. Recorder, to proclaim and cause it to be proclaimed to-morrow by that the sun is up, throughout the whole town of Mansoul. Moreover the Prince stripped the prisoners of their mourning weeds, and gave them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

Then he gave to each of the three, jewels of gold, and precious stones, and took away their ropes, and put chains of gold about their necks, and ear-rings in their ears. Now the prisoners, when they did hear the gracious words of Prince Emmanuel, and had beheld all that was done unto them, fainted almost quite away: for the grace, the benefit, the pardon, was sudden, glorious, and so big, that they were not able, without staggering, to stand up under it. Yea, my Lord Willbewill swooned outright, but the Prince stept to him, put his everlasting arms under him, embraced him, kissed him, and bid him be of good cheer, for all should be performed according to his word. He also did kiss and embrace, and smile upon the other two that were Willbewill's companions, saying, Take

these as further tokens of my love, favor and compassion to you; and I charge you, that you Mr. Recorder, tell in the town of Mansoul what you have heard and seen.

Then were their fetters broken to pieces before their faces, and cast into the air, and their steps were enlarged under them. Then they fell down at the feet of the Prince, and kissed his feet, and wetted them with tears: also they cried out with a mighty strong voice, saying, Blessed be the glory of the Lord from this place. So they were bid rise up, and go to the town, and tell to Mansoul what the Prince had done. He commanded also, that one with a pipe and tabor should go and play before them all the way into the town of Mansoul. Then was fulfilled what they never looked for, and they were made to possess that which they never dreamed of. The Prince also called for the noble Captain Credence, and commanded that he and some of his officers should march before the noblemen of Mansoul with flying colors into the town. He gave also unto Captain Credence a charge, that about the time that the Recorder did read the general pardon in the town of Mansoul, that at that very time he should, with flying colors, march in at Eye-gate with his ten thousand at his feet, and that he should so go until he came by the high street of the town up to the castle-gates, and that himself should take possession thereof against his Lord came thither. He commanded, moreover, that he should bid Captain Judgment, and Captain Execution, to leave the strong hold to him, and to withdraw from Mansoul, and to return into the camp with speed unto the Prince.

And now was the town of Mansoul also delivered from the terror of the first four captains and their men.

Well, I told you before, how the prisoners were entertained by the noble Prince Emmanuel, and how they behaved themselves before him, and how he sent them away to their home with pipe and tabor going before them. And now you must think, that those of the town that had all this while waited to hear of their death, could not but be exercised with sadness of mind, and with thoughts that pricked like thorns. Nor could their thoughts be kept to any one point: The wind blew them all this while at great uncertainties, yea, their hearts were like a balance that had been disquieted with a shaken hand. But at last as they, with many a long look, looked over the wall of Mansoul, they thought that they saw some returning to the town; and thought again, who should they be too, who should they be! At last they discerned, that they were the prisoners; but can you imagine how their hearts were surprised with wonder! especially when they perceived also in what equipage, and with what honor they were sent home! They went down to the camp in black, but they came back to the town in white; they went down to the camp in ropes, they came back in chains of gold; they went down to the camp with their feet in fetters, but came back with their steps enlarged under them; they went also to the camp, looking for death, but they came back from thence with assurance of life; they went down to the camp with heavy hearts, but came back again with pipe and tabor playing before them. As soon as they were come to Eye-gate, the poor and tottering town of Mansoul adventured to give a shout; and they gave such a shout, as made the captains in the Prince's army leap at the sound thereof.

Alas! for them poor hearts, who could blame them! since their dead friends were come to life again? for it was to them as life from the dead, to see the ancients of the town of Mansoul shine in such splendor. They looked for nothing but the axe and the block; but behold joy and gladness, comfort and consolation, and such melodious notes attending them that was sufficient to make a sick man well. So when they came up they saluted each other with welcome, welcome, and blessed be he that has spared you. They added also, We see it is well with you, but how must it go with the town of Mansoul, and will it go well with the town of Mansoul? said they. Then answered them the Recorder, and my Lord-Mayor, Oh! tidings! glad tidings! good tidings of good! and of great joy to poor Mansoul! Then they gave another shout that made the earth to ring again. After this they inquired yet more particularly how things went in the camp, and what message they had from Emmanuel to the town. So they told them all passages that had happened to them at the camp, and every thing that the Prince did to them. This made Mansoul wonder at the wisdom and grace of the Prince Emmanuel; then they told them what they had received at his hands for the whole town of Mansoul; and the Recorder delivered it in these words, PARDON, PARDON, PARDON for Mansoul; and this shall Mansoul know to-morrow. Then he commanded, and they went and summoned Mansoul to meet together in the Market-place to-morrow, there to hear their general pardon read.

But who can think what a turn, what a change, what an alteration, this hint of things did make in the countenance of the town of Mansoul! no man of Mansoul could sleep that night for joy; in every house there was joy and music, singing and making merry; telling and hearing of

Mansoul's happiness, was then all that Mansoul had to do; and this was the burden of all their song: Oh! more of this at the rising of the sun! more of this to-morrow! Who thought yesterday, would one say, that this day would have been such a day to us? And who thought that saw our prisoners go down in irons, that they would have returned in chains of gold! yea, they that judged themselves as they went to be judged of their judge, were by his mouth acquitted, not for that they were innocent, but of the Prince's mercy, and sent home with pipe and tabor.

But is this the common custom of Princes, do they use to show such kind of favors to traitors? No! This is only peculiar to Shaddai, and unto Emmanuel his Son.

Now morning drew on apace, wherefore the Lord-Mayor, the Lord Willbewill, and Mr. Recorder, came down to the market-place at the time the Prince had appointed, where the towns-folk were waiting for them; and when they came, they came in that attire, and in that glory that the Prince had put them into the day before, and the street was lightened with their glory. So the Mayor, Recorder, and my Lord Willbewill, drew down to Mouth-gate, which was at the lower end of the market-place, because that of old time was the place where they used to read public matters. Thither, therefore, they came in their robes, and their tabor went before them. Now, the eagerness of the people to know the full of the matter, was great.

Then the Recorder stood up upon his feet, and first beckoning with his hand for a silence, he read out with a loud voice the pardon. But when he came to these words, The Lord, the Lord God, is merciful and gracious, pardoning iniquity, transgressions, and sins; and to them all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven, &c., they could not forbear but leap for joy. For this you must know, that there was conjoined herewith every man's name in Mansoul; also the seals of the pardon made a brave show.

When the Recorder had made an end of reading the pardon, the townsmen ran upon the walls of the town, and leaped and skipped thereon for joy, and bowed themselves seven times with their faces towards Emmanuel's pavilion, and shouted out aloud for joy, and said, Let Emmanuel live for ever. Then order was given to the young men in Mansoul, that they should ring the bells for joy. (So the bells did ring, and the people sing, and the music played in every house in Mansoul.)

When the Prince had sent home the three prisoners of Mansoul with joy, and pipe and tabor, he commanded his captains, with all the field-officers and soldiers throughout his army, to be ready on the morning that the Recorder should read the pardon in Mansoul, to do his further pleasure. So the morning, as I have showed, being come, just as the Recorder had made an end of reading the pardon, Emmanuel commanded that all the trumpets in the camp should sound, that the colors should be displayed, half of them upon Mount Gracious, and half of them upon Mount Justice. He commanded also, that all the captains should show themselves in their complete harness, and that the soldiers should shout for joy. Nor was Captain Credence, though in the castle, silent on such a day; but he, from the top of the hold, showed himself with sound of trumpet to Mansoul, and to the Prince's camp.

Thus have I shewn you the manner and way that Emmanuel took to recover the town of Mansoul from under the hand and power of the tyrant Diabolus.

Now when the Prince had completed these outward ceremonies of his joy, he again commanded that his captains and soldiers should show unto Mansoul some feats of war. So they presently addressed themselves to this work. But oh! with what agility, nimbleness, dexterity, and bravery, did these military men discover their skill in feats of war to the now gazing town of Mansoul?

They marched, they counter-marched, they opened to the right and left, they divided and subdivided, they closed, they wheeled, made good their front and rear with their right and left wings, and twenty things more, with that aptness, and then were all as they were again, that they took, yea, ravished, the hearts that were in Mansoul to behold it. But add to this, the handling of their arms, the managing of their weapons of war, were marvellous taking to Mansoul and me.

When this action was over, the whole town of Mansoul came out as one man to the Prince in the camp to thank him, and praise him for his abundant favor, and to beg that it would please his Grace to come unto Mansoul, with his men, and there to take up their quarters for ever. And this they did in most humble manner, bowing themselves seven times to the ground before him; then said he, "All peace be to you;" so the town came nigh, and touched with the hand the top of his golden sceptre, and they said, Oh! that the Prince Emmanuel, with his captains and men of war, would dwell in Mansoul for ever; and that his battering-rams and slings might be lodged in her for the use and service of the Prince, and for the help and strength of Mansoul. For, said they, we have room for thee, we have also room for thy men; we have also room for thy weapons of war,

and a place to make a magazine for thy carriages. Do it, Emmanuel, and thou shalt be king and captain in Mansoul for ever. Yea, govern thou also according to all the desire of thy soul, and make thou governors and princes under thee of thy captains and men of war, and we will become thy servants, and thy laws shall be our direction.

They added, moreover, and prayed his Majesty to consider thereof; for, said they, if now after all this grace bestowed upon us thy miserable town of Mansoul, thou shouldest withdraw, thou and thy captains from us, the town of Mansoul will die. Yea, said they, our blessed Emmanuel, if thou shouldest depart from us now, after thou hast done so much good for us, and showed so much mercy unto us, what will follow, but that our joy will be as if it had not been, and our enemies will a second time come upon us with more rage than at the first? wherefore we beseech thee, O thou the desire of our eyes, and the strength and life of one poor town, accept of this motion that now we have made unto our Lord, and come and dwell in the midst of us, and let us be thy people. Besides, Lord, we do not know but that to this day many Diabolonians may yet be lurking in the town of Mansoul, and they will betray us, when thou shalt leave us, into the hand of Diabolus again! and who knows what designs, plots, or contrivances, have passed betwixt them about these things already; loth we are to fall again into his horrible hands. Wherefore let it please thee to accept of our palace for thy place of residence, and of the houses of the best men in our town, for the reception of thy soldiers, and their furniture.

Then said the Prince, "If I come to your town, will you suffer me further to prosecute that which is in mine heart against mine enemies and yours; yea, will you help me in such undertakings?"

They answered, We know not what we shall do; we did not think once that we should have been such traitors to Shaddai, as we have proved to be; what then shall we say to our Lord? let him put no trust in his saints; let the Prince dwell in our castle, and make of our town a garrison: let him set his noble captains and his warlike soldiers over us. Yea, let him conquer with his love, and overcome us with his grace, and help us, as he did that morning our pardon was read unto us; so shall we comply with this our Lord and with his ways, and fall in with his word against the mighty.

One word more, and thy servants have done, and in this will trouble our Lord no more. "We know not the depth of the wisdom of thee, our Prince. Who could have thought, that had been ruled by his reason; that so much sweet as we do now enjoy, should have come out of those bitter trials wherewith we were tried at the first? but, Lord, let light go before, and let love come after; yea, take us by the hand, and lead us by thy counsels, and let this always abide upon us, that all things shall be for the best for thy servants, and come to our Mansoul and do as it pleaseth thee. Or, Lord, come to our Mansoul; do what thou wilt, so thou keepest us from sinning, and makest us serviceable to thy Majesty.

Then said the Prince to the town of Mansoul again, "Go, return to your houses in peace, I will willingly in this comply with your desires. I will remove my royal pavilion, I will draw up my forces before Eye-gate to-morrow, and so will march forwards into the town of Mansoul. I will possess myself of your castle of Mansoul, and will set my soldiers over you; yea, I will yet do things in Mansoul that cannot be paralleled in any nation, country, and kingdom, under heaven."

Then did the men of Mansoul give a shout and returned unto their houses in peace; they also told to their kindred and friends the good that Emmanuel had promised to Mansoul. And to-morrow, said they he will march into our town, and take up his dwelling, he and his men in Mansoul.

Then went out the inhabitants of the town of Mansoul with haste to the green trees, and to the meadows, to gather boughs and flowers, therewith to strew the streets against their Prince, the Son of Shaddai, should come; they also made garlands and other fine works, to betoken how joyful they were, and should be to receive their Emmanuel into Mansoul; yea they strewed the street quite from Eye-gate to the castle-gate, the place where the Prince should be. They also prepared for his coming what music the town of Mansoul could afford, that they might play before him to the palace, his habitation.

So at the time appointed he makes his approach to Mansoul, and the gates were set open for him; there also the ancients and elders of Mansoul met him to salute him with a thousand welcomes. Then he arose and entered Mansoul, he and all his servants. The elders of Mansoul did also go dancing before him till he came to the castle gates. And this was the manner of his going up thither. He was clad in his golden armor, he rode in his royal chariot, the trumpets sounded about him, the colors were displayed, his ten thousands went up at his feet, and the elders of Mansoul danced before him. And now were the walls of the famous town of Mansoul filled with the tramplings of the inhabitants thereof, who went up thither to view the approach

of the blessed Prince, and his royal army. Also the casements, windows, balconies and tops of the houses, were all now filled with persons of all sorts, to behold how their town was to be filled with good.

Now, when he was come so far into the town as to the Recorder's house, he commanded that one should go to Captain Credence, to know whether the castle of Mansoul was prepared to entertain his Royal presence, (for the preparation of that was left to that Captain;) and word was brought that it was. Then was Captain Credence commanded also to come forth with his power to meet the Prince; the which was as he had commanded, done, and he conducted him into the castle. This done, the Prince that night did lodge in the castle with his mighty captains and men of war, to the joy of the town of Mansoul.

Now the next care of the townsfolk, was how the captains and soldiers of the Prince's army should be quartered among them; and the care was not, how they should shut their hands of them, but how they should fill their houses with them; for every man in Mansoul now had that esteem of Emmanuel and his men, that nothing grieved them more, than because they were not enlarged enough, every one of them, to receive the whole army of the Prince; yea they counted it their glory to be waiting upon them; and would in those days, run at their bidding like lackies. At last they came to this result:

1. That Captain Innocency should quarter at Mr. Reason's.

2. That Captain Patience should quarter at Mr. Mind's. This Mr. Mind was formerly the Lord Willbewill's clerk, in time of the late rebellion.

3. It was ordered that Captain Charity should quarter at Mr. Affection's houses.

4. That Captain Good-hope should quarter at my Lord Mayor's. Now for the house of the Recorder, himself desired, because his house was next to the castle, and because from him it was ordered by the Prince, that if need be, the alarm should be given to Mansoul; it was, I say, desired by him, that Captain Boanerges and Captain Conviction should take up their quarters with him, even they and all their men.

5. As for Captain Judgment and Captain Execution, my Lord Willbewill took them and their men to him, because he was to rule under the Prince for the good of the town of Mansoul now, as he had before under the tyrant Diabolus, for the hurt and damage thereof.

6. And throughout the rest of the town were quartered Emmanuel's forces; but Captain Credence with his men abode still in the castle. So the Prince, his captains, and his soldiers, were lodged in the town of Mansoul.

Now the ancients and elders of the town of Mansoul thought that they never should have enough of the Prince Emmanuel; his person, his actions, his words, and behavior, were so pleasing, so taking, so desirable to them. Wherefore they prayed him, that though the castle of Mansoul was his place of residence, (and they desired that he might dwell there for ever,) yet that he would often visit the streets, houses, and people of Mansoul: for, said they, dread Sovereign, thy presence, thy looks, thy smiles, thy words, are the life, and strength, and sinews of the town of Mansoul.

Beside this, they craved that they might have, without difficulty or interruption, continual access unto him, (so for that very purpose he commanded that the gates should stand open,) that they might there see the manner of his doings, the fortifications of the place, and the royal mansion-house of the Prince.

When he spake, they all stopped their mouths, and gave audience; and when he walked, it was their delight to imitate him in his goings.

Now, upon a time, Emmanuel made a feast for the town of Mansoul, and upon the feasting-day the townsfolk were come to the castle to partake of his banquet. And he feasted them with all manner of outlandish food, food that grew not in the fields of Mansoul, nor in all the whole kingdom of Universe. It was food that came from his Father's court. And so there was dish after dish set before them, and they were commanded freely to eat. But still when a fresh dish was set before them they would whisperingly say to each other, What is it? for they wist not what to call it. They drank also of the water that was made wine, and were very merry with him. There was music also all the while at the table, and man did eat angel's food, and had honey given him out of the rock. So Mansoul did eat the food that was peculiar to the court; yea, they had now thereof to the full.

I must not forget to tell you, that as at this table there were musicians, so they were not those of the country, nor yet of the town of Mansoul; but they were the masters of the songs that were sung at the court of Shaddai.

Now, after the feast was over, Emmanuel was for entertaining the town of Mansoul with some curious riddles of secrets drawn up by his Father's secretary, by the skill and wisdom of Shaddai. The like to these there is not in any kingdom. These riddles were made upon the King Shaddai himself, and upon Emmanuel his Son, and upon his wars and doings with Mansoul.

Emmanuel also expounded unto them some of those riddles himself: but, oh! how they were lightened! they saw what they never saw; they could not have thought that such rarities could have been couched in so few and such ordinary words I told you before whom these riddles did concern; and as they were opened the people did evidently see it was so. Yea, they did gather, that the things themselves were a kind of portraiture, and that of Emmanuel himself; for when they read in the scheme where the riddles were writ, and looked in the face of the Prince, things looked so like the one to the other, that Mansoul could not forbear but say, "This is the Lamb; this is the Sacrifice; this is the Rock; this is the Red Cow this is the Door; and this is the Way;" with a great many other things more.

And thus he dismissed the town of Mansoul. But can you imagine how the people of the corporation were taken with this entertainment? Oh, they were transported with joy they were drowned with wonderment, while they saw, and understood, and considerd, what their Emmanuel entertained them withal, and what mysteries he opened to them; and when they were at home in their houses, and in their most retired places, they could not but sing of him, and of his actions. Yea, so taken were the townsmen now with their Prince, that they would sing of him in their sleep.

Now, it was in the heart of Prince Emmanuel to new model the town of Mansoul, and to put it into such a condition as might be more pleasing to him, and that might best stand with the profit and security of the now flourishing town of Mansoul. He provided also against insurrections at home, and invasions from abroad; such love had he for the famous town of Mansoul.

Wherefore he first commanded, that the great slings that were brought from his Father's court, when he came to the war of Mansoul, should be mounted, some upon the battlements of the castle, some upon the towers, for there were towers in the town of Mansoul, towers new built by Emmanuel since he came thither. There was also an instrument invented by Emmanuel, that was to throw stones from the castle of Mansoul, out at Mouth-gate; an instrument that could not be resisted, nor that would miss of execution; wherefore, for the wonderful exploits that it did when used, it went without a name, and it was committed to the care of, and to be managed by, the brave captain, the Captan Credence, in case of war.

This done, Emmanuel called the Lord Willbewill to him, and gave him in commandment to take care of the gates, the wall and towers in Mansoul; also the Prince gave him the militia into his hand, and a special charge to withstand all insurrections and tumults that might be made in Mansoul, against the peace of our Lord the King, and the peace and tranquillity of the town of Mansoul. He also gave him in commission, that if he found any of the Diabolonians lurking in any corner in the famous town of Mansoul, he should forthwith apprehend them, and stay them, or commit them to safe custody, that they may be proceeded against according to law.

Then he called unto him the Lord Understanding, who was the old Lord-Mayor, he that was put out of place when Diabolus took the town, and put him into his former office again; and it became his place for his life-time. He bid him also that he should build him a palace near Eye-gate, and that he should build it in fashion like a tower for defence. He bid him also that he should read in the revelation of mysteries all the days of his life, that he might know how to perform his office aright.

He also made Mr. Knowledge the Recorder: not of contempt to old Mr. Conscience, who had been Recorder before, but for that it was in his princely mind to confer upon Mr. Conscience another employ, of which he told the old gentleman he should know more hereafter.

Then he commanded that the image of Diabolus should be taken down from the place where it was set up, and that they should destroy it utterly, beating of it into powder and casting it into the wind, without the town-wall; and that the image of Shaddai his Father should be set up again, with his own, upon the castle-gates; and that it should be more fairly drawn than ever, forasmuch as both his Father and himself were come to Mansoul in more grace and mercy than heretofore. He would also that his name should be fairly engraven upon the front of the town, and that it should be done in the best of gold, for the honor of the town of Mansoul.

After this was done, Emmanuel gave out a commandment, that those three great Diabolonians should be apprehended; namely, the two late Lord-Mayors; to wit, Mr. Incredulity, Mr. Lustings and Mr. Forget-good, the Recorder. Besides these, there were some of them that Diabolus made burgesses and aldermen in the town of Mansoul, that were committed to ward, by the hand of the now valiant and now Right Noble the brave Lord Willbewill.

And these were their names: Alderman Atheism, Aldermen Hard-heart, and Alderman False-peace; the burgesses were, Mr. No-truth, Mr. Pitiless Mr. Haughty, with the like. These were committed to close custody; and the gaoler's name was Mr. True-man; this True-man was one

of those that Emmanuel brought with him from his Father's court, when at the first he made a war upon Diabolus in the town of Mansoul.

After this, the Prince gave a charge, that the three strong holds, that at the command of Diabolus, the Diabolonians had built in Mansoul, should be demolished, and utterly pulled down; of which holds, and their names, with their captains, and governors, you read a little before. But this was long in doing, because of the largeness of the places, and because the stones, the timber the iron, and all rubbish, was to be carried without the town.

When this was done, the Prince gave order that the Lord-Mayor and Aldermen of Mansoul should call a court of judicature, for the trial and execution of the Diabolonians in the corporation, now under the charge of Mr. True-man the gaoler.

Now when the time was come, and the court set, commandment was sent to Mr. True-man the gaoler, to bring the prisoners down to the bar. Then were the prisoners brought down pinioned, and chained together, as the custom of the town of Mansoul was. So when they were presented before the Lord-Mayor, the Recorder, and the rest of the honourable bench, first the jury was empannelled, and then the witnesses sworn. The names of the jury were these: Mr. Belief, Mr. True-heart, Mr. Upright, Mr. Hate-bad, Mr. Love-god, Mr. See-truth, Mr. Heavenly-mind, Mr. Moderate, Mr. Thankful, Mr. Good-work, Mr. Zeal-for-God, and Mr. Humble.

The names of the witnesses were Mr. Know-all, Mr. Tell-true, Mr. Hate-lies, with my Lord Willbewill and his man, if need were.

So the prisoners were set to the bar. Then said Mr. Do-right, (for he was the town-clerk,) Set Atheism to the bar, gaoler. So he was set to the bar. Then said the clerk, Atheism, hold up thy hand. Thou art here indicted by the name of Atheism, an intruder upon the town of Mansoul, for that thou hast perniciously and doltishly taught and maintained, that there is no God, and so no heed to be taken to religion. This thou hast done, against the being, honor, and glory of the King, and against the peace and safety of the town of Mansoul. What sayest thou, art thou guilty of this indictment or not?

Atheism. Not guilty.

Crier. Call Mr. Know-all, Mr. Tell-true, and Mr. Hate-lies, into the court.

So they were called, and they appeared.

Clerk. Then said the clerk, You the witnesses for the King, look upon the prisoner at the bar; do you now him?

Know. Then said Mr. Know-all, Yes, my Lord, we know him, his name is Atheism: he has been a very pestilent fellow for many years in the miserable town of Mansoul.

Clerk. You are sure you know him?

Know. Know him? Yes my Lord: I have heretofore too often been in his company, to be at this time ignorant of him. He is a Diabolonian, the son of a Diabolonian: I knew his grandfather and his father.

Clerk. Well said; he standeth here indicted by the name of Atheism, &c., and is charged that he hath maintained and taught that there is no God, and so no heed need be taken to any religion. What say you the King's witnesses to this? Is he guilty or not?

Know. My Lord, I and he were once in Villian's-lane together, and he at that time did briskly talk of divers opinions, and then and there I heard him say that for his part he did believe that there was no God. But, said he, I can profess one, and be religious too, if the company I am in, and the circumstances of other things, said he shall put me upon it.

Clerk. You are sure you heard him say thus?

Know. Upon mine oath I heard him say thus?

Then said the clerk, Mr. Tell-true, what say you to the King's judges, touching the prisoner at the bar?

Tell. My Lord, I formerly was a great companion of his, (for the which I now repent me,) and I have often heard him say, and that with very great stomachfulness, that he believed there was neither God, angel, nor spirit.

Clerk. Where did you hear him say so?

Tell. In Blackmouth-lane, and in Blasphemer's-row, and in many other places besides.

Clerk. Have you much knowledge of him?

Tell. I know him to be Diabolonian, the son of a Diabolonian, and an horrible man to deny a Deity; his father's name was Never-be-good, and he had more children than this Atheism. I have no more to say.

Clerk. Mr. Hate-lies, look upon the prisoner at the bar; do you know him?

Hate. My Lord, this Atheism is one of the vilest wretches that ever I came near, or had to do with in my life. I have heard him say that there is no God; I have heard him say that there is no world to come, no sin nor punishment hereafter; and moreover, I have heard him say, that it was as good to go to a whore-house, as to hear a sermon.

Clerk. where did you hear him say these things?

Hate. In Drunkard's-row, just at Rascal-lane's end, at a house in which Mr. Impiety lived.

Clerk. Set him by gaoler, and set Mr. Lustings to the bar. Mr. Lustings, thou art here indicted by the name of Lustings, an intruder upon the town of Mansoul, for that thou hast devilishly and traitorously taught by practice and filthy words, that it is lawful and profitable to man to give way to his carnal desires; and that, thou, for thy part, has not, nor never will, deny thyself of any sinful delight, as long as thy name is Lustings. How sayest thou, art thou guilty of this indictment or not!

Lust. Then said Mr. Lustings My Lord, I am a man of high birth, and have been used to pleasures and pastimes of greatness. I have not been wont to be snubbed for my doings, but have been left to follow my will as if it were law. And it seems strange to me, that I should this day be called into question for that, which not only I, but also all men, do either secretly or openly countenance, love, and approve of.

Clerk. Sir, we concern not ourselves with your greatness, though the higher, the better you should have been; but we are concerned, and so are you now, about an indictment preferred against you. How say you are you guilty of it or not?

Lust. Not guilty.

Clerk. Crier, call upon the witnesses to stand forth, and give their evidence.

Crier. Gentlemen, you the witnesses for the King, come in, and give in your evidence for our Lord the King, against the prisoner at the bar.

Clerk. Come Mr. Know-all, look upon the prisoner at the bar; do you know him?

Know. Yes, my Lord, I know him.

Clerk. What is his name?

Know. His name is Lustings: he was the son of one Beastly, and his mother bare him in Flesh-street; she was one Evil, Concupiscence's daughter. I knew all the generation of them.

Clerk. Well said: you have here heard his indictment, what say you to it, is he guilty of the things charged against him or not?

Know. My Lord, he has, as he saith, been a great man indeed; and greater in wickedness than by pedigree, more than a thousand-fold.

Clerk. But what do you know of his particular actions, and especially with reference to his indictment?

Know. I know him to be a swearer, a liar, a sabbath-breaker; I know him to be a fornicator, and an unclean person; I know him to be guilty of abundance of evils. He has been to my knowledge a very filthy man.

Clerk. But where did he use to commit his wickedness, in some private corners, or more open and shamelessly?

Know. All the town over, my Lord.

Clerk. Come, Mr. Tell-true, what have you to say for our Lord the King, against the prisoner at the bar?

Tell. My Lord, all that the first witness has said, I know to be true, and a great deal more besides.

Clerk. Mr. Lustings, do you hear what these gentlemen say?

Lust. I was ever of opinion, that the happiest life that a man could live on earth, was to keep himself back from nothing that he desired in the world; nor have I been false at any time to this opinion of mine, but have lived in the love of my notions all my days. Nor was I ever so churlish, having found such sweetness in them myself, as to keep the commendations of them from others.

Court. Then said the Court, There hath proceeded enough from his own mouth to lay him open to condemnation, wherefore, set him by, gaoler, and set Mr. Incredulity to the bar.

Incredulity set to the bar.

Clerk. Mr. Incredulity, thou art here indicted by the name of Incredulity, an intruder upon the town of Mansoul, for that thou hast feloniously and wickedly, and that when thou wert an officer in the town of Mansoul, made head against the captains of the great King Shaddai, when they came and demanded possession of Mansoul; yea, thou didst bid defiance to the name, forces, and cause of the King, and didst also, as did Diabolus thy captain, stir up and encourage the town of Mansoul to make head against, and resist the said force of the King. What sayest thou to this indictment? Art thou guilty or not?

Then said Incredulity, I know not Shaddai; I love my old Prince; I thought it my duty to be true to my trust, and to do what I could to possess the minds of the men of Mansoul, to do their utmost to resist strangers and foreigners, and with might to fight against them. Nor have I, nor shall I, change my opinion for fear of trouble, though you at present are possessed of place and power.

Court. Then said the court, The man, as you see, is incorrigible; he is for maintaining his villainies by stoutness of words, and his rebellion with impudent confidence; and therefore set him by gaoler; and set Mr. Forget-good to the bar.

Forget-good set to the bar.

Clerk. Mr. Forget-good, thou art here indicted by the name of Forget-good, an intruder upon the town of Mansoul, for that thou when the whole affairs of the town of Mansoul were in thy hand, didst utterly forget to serve them in what was good, and didst fall in with the tyrant Diabolus against Shaddai the King, against his cap-

tains, and all his host, to the dishonor of Shaddai, the breach of his law, and the endangering of the destruction of the famous town of Mansoul. What sayest thou to this indictment? Art thou guilty or not guilty?

Then said Forget-good, Gentlemen, and at this time my judges, as to the indictment, by which I stand of several crimes accused before you, pray attribute my forgetfulness to mine age, and not to mine wilfulness; to the craziness of my brain, and not to the carelessness of my mind; and then I hope I may, by your charity, be excused from great punishment, though I be guilty.

Then said the court, Forget-good, Forget-good, thy forgetfulness of good was not simply of frailty, but of purpose, and for that thou didst loath to keep virtuous things in thy mind.—What was bad thou couldst retain, but what was good thou couldst not abide to think of; thy age, therefore, and thy pretended craziness, thou makest use of to blind the court withal, and as a cloak to cover thy knavery. But let us hear what the witnesses have to say for the King against the prisoner at the bar. Is he guilty of this indictment or not?

Hate-lies. My Lord, I have heard this Forget-good say, that he could never abide to think of goodness, no not for a quarter of an hour.

Clerk. Where did you hear him say so?

Hate. In All-base-lane, at a house next door to the sign of the Conscience-seared-with-an-hot-iron.

Clerk. Mr. Know-all, what can you say for our Lord the King, against the prisoner at the bar?

Know. My Lord, I know this man well, he is a Diabolonian, the son of a Diabolonian, his father's name was Love-naught; and for him, I have often heard him say, that he counted the very thoughts of goodness the most burthensome thing in the world.

Clerk. Where have you heard him say these words?

Know. In Flesh-lane, right opposite the church.

Then said the Clerk, Come, Mr. Tell-true give in your evidence concerning the prisoner at the bar, about that for which he stands here, as you see, indicted before this honorable court.

Tell. My Lord, I have heard him often say, he had rather think of the vilest thing, than of what is contained in the holy scriptures.

Clerk. Where did you hear him say such grievous words?

Tell. Where? in a great many places; particularly in Nauseous-street, in the house of one Shameless, and in Filth-lane, at the sign of the Reprobate, next door to the Descent-into-the-pit.

Court. Gentlemen, you have heard the indictment, his plea, and the testimony of the witnesses. Gaoler, set Mr. Hard-heart to the bar.

He is set to the bar.

Clerk. Mr. Hard-heart thou art here indicted by the name of Hard-heart, (an intruder upon the town of Mansoul,) for that thou didst most desperately and wickedly possess the town of Mansoul with impenitency and obdurateness, and didst keep them from remorse and sorrow for their evils, all the time of their apostacy from, and rebellion against, the blessed King Shaddai. What sayest thou to this indictment, art thou guilty or not guilty?

Hard. My Lord, I never knew what remorse or sorrow meant in all my life: I am impenetrable; I care for no man; nor can I be pierced with men's grief, their groans will not enter into my heart; whomsoever I mischief, whomsoever I wrong, to me it is music when to others mourning.

Court. You see the man is a right Diabolonian, and has convicted himself. Set him by gaoler, and set Mr. False-peace to the bar.

False-peace set to the bar.

Mr. False-peace, thou art here indicted by the name of False-peace, (an intruder upon the town of Mansoul) for that thou didst most wickedly and satanically bring, hold, and keep the town of Mansoul, both in her apostacy, and in her hellish rebellion, in a false, groundless, and dangerous peace, and damnable security, to the dishonor of the King, the transgression of his law, and the great damage of the town of Mansoul. What sayest thou, art thou guilty of this indictment or not?

Then said Mr. False-peace, Gentlemen, and you now appointed to be my judges, I acknowledge that my name is Mr. Peace; but that my name is False-peace I utterly deny. If your honors should please to send for any that do intimately know me, or for the midwife that laid my mother of me, or for the gossips that were at my christening, they will any or all of them prove, that my name is not False-peace, but Peace. Wherefore, I cannot plead to this indictment, for as much as my name is not inserted therein; and as is my *true* name, so also are my conditions. I was always a man that loved to live at quiet, and what I loved myself, that I thought others might love also. Wherefore, when I saw any of my neighbors to labor under a disquieted mind, I endeavored to help them what I could; and instances of this good temper of mine, many I could give: As,

1. When at the beginning our town of

Mansoul did decline the ways of Shaddai, some of them afterwards began to have disquieting reflections upon themselves for what they had done; but I, as one troubled to see them disquieted, presently sought out means to get them quiet again.

2. When the ways of the old world, and of Sodom, were in fashion, if any thing happened to molest those that were for the customs of the present times, I labored to make them quiet again, and to cause them to act without molestation.

3. To come nearer home: When the wars fell out between Shaddai and Diabolus, if at any time I saw any of the town of Mansoul afraid of destruction, I often used by some way, device, invention, or other, to labor to bring them to peace again.

Wherefore since I have been always the man of so virtuous a temper, as some say, a peace-maker is; and if a peace-maker be so deserving a man, as some have been bold to attest he is; then let me, gentlemen, be accounted by you, who have a great name for justice and equity, in Mansoul, for a man that deserveth not this inhuman way of treatment, but liberty, and also a license to seek damage of those that have been my accusers.

Then said the clerk, Crier, make proclamation.

Crier. "O yes: Forasmuch as the prisoner at the bar hath denied his name to be that which is mentioned in the indictment, the court requireth, that if any there be in this place that can give information to the court of the original and right name of the prisoner, they would come forth and give in their evidence; for the prisoner stands upon his own innocence."

Then came two into the court, and desired, that they might have leave to speak what they knew concerning the prisoner at the bar; the name of the one was Search-truth, and the name of the other Vouch-truth: So the court demanded of these men, if they knew the prisoner; and what they could say concerning him; for he stands, said they, upon his own vindication.

Then said Mr. Search-truth, My Lord, I—

Court. Hold—give him his oath; then they sware him. So he proceeded.

Search. My Lord, I know, and have known this man from a child, and can attest that his name is False-peace. I knew his father, his name was Mr. Flatterer, and his mother before she was married was called by the name of Mrs. Sooth-up, and these two when they came together, lived not long without this son; and when he was born, they called his name False-peace. I was his play-fellow, only I was somewhat older than he; and when his mother did use to call him home from play, she used to say, "False-peace, False-peace, come home quick, or I'll fetch you." Yea, I knew him when he sucked; and though I was then but little, yet I can remember that when his mother did use to sit at the door with him, or did play with him in her arms, she would call him twenty times together, "My little False-peace, my pretty False-peace, and O! my sweet rogue, False-peace;" and again. "O! my little bird, False-peace; and how do I love my child!" The gossips also know it is thus, though he had the face to deny it in open court.

Then Mr. Vouch-truth was called upon to speak what he knew of him. So they sware him.

Then said Mr. Vouch-truth, My Lord all that the former witness hath said is true; his name is False-peace, the son of Mr. Flatterer, and of Mrs. Sooth-up his mother. And I have in former times seen him angry with those who have called him any thing else but False-peace; for he would say, that all such did mock and nick-name him; but this was in the time when Mr. False-peace was a great man, and when the Diabolonians were the brave men in Mansoul.

Court. Gentlemen, you have heard what these two men have sworn against the prisoner at the bar; and now Mr. False-peace to you: You have denied your name to be False-peace, yet you see that these honest men have sworn that this is your name. As to your plea, in that you are quite beside the matter of your indictment; you are not by it charged for evil-doing because you are a man of peace, or a peace-maker among your neighbors; but for that you did wickedly, satanically, bring, keep, and hold the town of Mansoul, both under its apostacy from, and in its rebellion against, its King, in a false, lying, and damnable peace, contrary to the law of Shaddai, and likewise to the hazard of the destruction of the then miserable town of Mansoul. All that you have pleaded for yourself is, that you have denied your name, &c., but here you see we have witnesses to prove that you are the man.

For the peace that you so much boast of making among your neighbors, know, That the peace that is not a companion of truth and holiness, but which is without this foundation, is grounded upon a lie, and is both deceitful and damnable as also the great Shaddai hath said; thy plea therefore has not delivered thee from what by the indictment thou art charged with, but rather it doth fasten all upon thee.

But thou shalt have very fair play: let us call the witnesses that are to testify, as

to matter of fact, and see what they have to say for our Lord the King against the prisoner at the bar.

Clerk. Mr. Know-all, what say you for our Lord the King against the prisoner at the bar?

Know. My Lord, this man hath of a long time made it, to my knowledge, his business to keep the town of Mansoul in a sinful quietness, in the midst of all her lewdness, filthiness, and turmoils; and hath said, and that in my hearing, Come, come, let us fly from all trouble, on what ground soever it comes, and let us be for a quiet and peaceable life, though it wanteth a good foundation.

Clerk. Come, Mr. Hate-lies, what have you to say?

Hate. My Lord, I have heard him say, that peace, though in a way of unrighteousness, is better than trouble with truth.

Clerk. Where did you hear him say this?

Hate I heard him say it in Folly-yard, at the house of one Mr. Simple, next door to the sign of the Self-deceiver. Yea, he hath said this to my knowledge twenty times in that place.

Clerk. We may spare further witness; this evidence is plain and full. Set him by, gaoler, and set Mr. No-truth to the bar.

Mr. No-truth, thou art here indicted by the name of No-truth, (an intruder upon the town of Mansoul,) for that thou hast always, to the dishonor of Shaddai, and to the endangering of the utter ruin of the famous town of Mansoul, set thyself to deface, and utterly to spoil all the remainders of the law and image of Shaddai that have been found in Mansoul, after her deep apostacy from her King to Diabolus, that envious tyrant. What sayest thou? art thou guilty of this indictment or not?

No-truth. Not guilty my Lord.

Then the witnesses were called, and Mr. Know-all did first give in his evidence against him.

Know. My Lord, this man was at the pulling down of the image of Shaddai; yea, this is he that did it with his own hands. I myself stood by and saw him do it, and he did it at the commandment of Diabolus. Yea, this Mr. No-truth did more than this, he did also set up the horned image of the beast Diabolus in the same place. This also is he that at the bidding of Diabolus did rent and tear, and cause to be consumed, all that he could of the remainders of the law of the King, even whatever he could lay his hands on in Mansoul.

Clerk Who saw him do this besides yourself?

Hate. I did, my Lord, and so did many others beside, for this was not done by stealth, or in a corner, but in the open view of all, yea, he chose himself to do it publicly; for he delighted in doing it.

Clerk. Mr. No-truth, how could you have the face to plead not guilty, when you were so manifestly the doer of all this wickedness?

No-truth. Sir, I thought I must say something, and as my name is, so I speak; I have been advantaged thereby before now, and did not know but by speaking No-truth, I might have reaped the same benefit now.

Clerk. Set him by, gaoler, and set Mr. Pitiless to the bar. Mr. Pitiless, thou art here indicted by the name of Pitiless, (an intruder upon the town of Mansoul,) for that thou didst most traitorously and wickedly shut up all bowels of compassion, and wouldst not suffer poor Mansoul to condole her own misery when she had apostatized from her rightful King, but didst evade, and at all times turn her mind away from those thoughts that had in them a tendency to lead her to repentance. What sayest thou to this indictment: Guilty or not Guilty?

Pitiless. Not Guilty of Pitilessness: All I did was to cheer up, according to my name, for my name is not Pitiless, but Cheer-up; and I could not abide to see Mansoul incline to melancholy.

Clerk. How! do you deny your name, and say it is not Pitiless, but Cheer-up; call for the witnesses; what say you the witnesses to this plea?

Know. My Lord, his name is Pitiless; so he hath writ himself in all papers of concern wherein he has had to do. But these Diabolonians love to counterfeit their names: Mr. Covetousness covers himself with the name of Good-husbandry, or the like; Mr. Pride can, when need, call himself Mr. Neat, Mr. Handsome, or the like, and so of all the rest of them.

Clerk. Mr, Tell-true, what say you?

Tell. His name is Pitiless, my Lord; I have known him from a child, and he hath done all that wickedness where with he stands charged in the indictment; but there is a company of them that are not acquainted with the danger of damning, therefore they call all those melancholy that have serious thoughts how that state should be shunned by them.

Clerk. Set Mr. Haughty to the bar, gaoler. Mr. Haughty, thou art here indicted by the name of Haughty, (an intruder upon the town of Mansoul,) for that thou didst most traitorously and devilishly teach the town of Mansoul to carry it loftily and stoutly against the summonses that were given them by the captains of the King Shaddai. Thou didst also teach the town of Mansoul to speak contemptuously, and vilifyingly of their great King Shaddai; and didst moreover, encourage, both by words and examples, Mansoul to take up arms both against the King and his Son Emmanuel. How

sayest thou, art thou guilty of this indictment or not?

Haughty. Gentlemen, I have always been a man of courage and valour, and have not used, when under the greatest clouds, to sneak or hang down the head like a bull-rush; nor did it please me at all at any time to see men veil their bonnets to those that have opposed them: Yea, though their adversaries seemed to have ten times the advantage of them.

I did not use to consider who was my foe, nor what the cause was in which I was engaged. It was enough to me if I carried it bravely, fought like a man, and came off a victor.

Court. Mr. Haughty you are not here indicted for that you have been a valiant man, nor for your courage and stoutness in times of distress, but for that you have made use of this your pretended valour to draw the town of Mansoul into acts of rebellion both against the great King and Emmanuel his Son. This is the crime and the thing wherewith thou art charged in and by the indictment.

But he made no answer to that.

Now when the court had thus far proceeded against the prisoners at the bar, then they put them over to the verdict of their jury, to whom they did apply themselves after this matter.

Court. Gentlemen of the jury, you have been here, and have seen these men, you have heard their indictments, their pleas, and what the witnesses have testified against them; now what remains, is that you do forthwith withdraw yourselves to some place, where, without confusion, you may consider of what verdict, in a way of truth and righteousness, you ought to bring in for the King against them, and bring it in accordingly.

Then the jury, to wit, Mr. Belief, Mr. True-heart, Mr. Upright, Mr. Hate-bad, Mr. Love-good, Mr. See-truth, Mr. Heavenly-mind, Mr. Moderate, Mr. Thankful, Mr. Humble, Mr. Good-work, and Mr. Zeal-for-God, withdrew themselves in order to their work; now when they were shut up by themselves, they fell to discourse among themselves in order to the drawing up of their verdict.

And thus Mr. Belief, (for he was the foreman,) began; "Gentlemen," quoth he, "for the men, the prisoners at the bar, for my part I believe they all deserve death." "Very right," said Mr. True-heart, "I am wholly of your opinion." "O what a mercy, is it," said Mr. Hate-bad, "that such villains as these are apprehended!" "Ay, ay," said Mr. Love-good, "this is one of the joyfullest days that ever I saw in my life." Then said Mr. See-truth, "I know that if we judge them to death, our verdict shall stand before Shaddai himself." "Nor do I at all question it," said Mr. Heavenly-mind; he said moreover, "When all such beasts as these are cast out of Mansoul, what goodly town will it be then!" Then said Mr, Moderate, "It is not my manner to pass my judgment with rashness; but for these, their crimes are so notorious, and the witness so palpable, that that man must be wilfully blind who saith the prisoners ought not to die." "Blessed be God," said Mr. Thankful, "that the traitors are in safe custody." "And I join with you in this upon my bare knees," said Mr. Humble. "I am glad also," said Mr. Good-work. Then said the warm man, and true hearted Mr. Zeal-for-God, "Cut them off, they have been the plague, and have sought the destruction, of Mansoul."

Thus therefore being all agreed in their verdict, they came instantly into the court.

Clerk. Gentlemen of the jury, answer all to your names. Mr. Belief, one; Mr. True-heart, two; Mr. Upright, three; Mr. Hate-bad, four; Mr. Love-Good, five; Mr. See-truth, six; Mr. Heavenly-mind, seven; Mr. Moderate, eight; Mr. Thankful, nine Mr. Humble, ten; Mr. Good-work, eleven; and Mr. Zeal-for-God, twelve; Good men and true; stand together in your verdict. Are you all agreed?

Jury. Yes, my Lord.

Clerk. Who shall speak for you?

Jury. Our foreman.

Clerk. You, the gentlemen of the jury, being impannelled for our Lord the King, to serve here in a matter of life and death, have heard the trials of each of these men, the prisoners at the bar, what say you, are they guilty of that and those crimes for which they stand here indicted, or are they not guilty?

Foreman. Guilty, my Lord.

Clerk. Look to your prisoners, gaoler.

This was done in the morning, and in the afternoon they received the sentence of death according to the law.

The gaoler, therefore, having received such a charge, put them all in the inward prison, to preserve them there till the day of execution, which was to be the next day in the morning.

But now to see how it happened, one of the prisoners, Incredulity by name, in the interim betwixt the sentence and the time of execution, brake prison, and made his escape, and gets him away quite out of the town of Mansoul, and lay lurking in such places and holds as he might, untill he should again have opportunity to do the town of Mansoul a mischief, for their thus handling of him as they did.

Now when Mr. True-man, the gaoler, perceived that he had lost his prisoner, he was in a heavy taking, because, that prisoner we speak of, he was the very worst of

the whole gang; wherefore, first he goes and acquaints my Lord-Mayor, Mr. Recorder and my Lord Willbewill, with the matter, and to get of them an order to make search for him throughout the town of Mansoul. So an order he got, and search was made, but no such man could now be found in all the town of Mansoul.

All that could be gathered was, that he had lurked awhile about the outside of the town, and that here and there one or other had a glimpse of him, as he made his escape out of Mansoul; one or two also did affirm, that they saw him without the town, going apace quite over the plain. Now when he was quite gone, it was affirmed by one Mr. Did-see, that he ranged all over dry places, till he met with Diabolus his friend; and where should they meet one another, but just upon Hell-gate-hill!

But oh! what a lamentable story did the old gentleman tell to Diabolus concerning what said alterations Emmanuel had made in Mansoul.

As first, how Mansoul had, after some delays, received a general pardon at the hands of Emmanuel; and that they had invited him into the town; and that they had given him the castle for his possession. He said, moreover, that they had called his soldiers into the town, and coveted who should quarter the most of them; they also entertained him with the timbrel, song, and dance. "But that," said Incredulity, "that is the sorest vexation to me, that he hath pulled down, O father, thy image, and set up his own: pulled down thy officers and set up his own. Yea, and Willbewill, that rebel, who, one would have thought, should never have turned from us, he is now in as great favour with Emmanuel as ever he was with thee. But besides all this, this Willbewill has received a special commission from his Master, to search for, to apprehend and to put to death, all and all manner of Diabolonians that he shall find in Mansoul. Yea, and this Willbewill has taken and committed to prison already eight of my Lord's most trusty friends in Mansoul. Nay, further, my Lord, with grief I speak it, they have been all arraigned, condemned and I doubt not, before this time, executed in Mansoul. I told my Lord of eight, and myself was the ninth, who should assuredly have drunk of the same cup, but that through craft I, as thou seest, have made mine escape from them."

When Diabolus had heard this lamentable story, he yelled and snuffed up the wind like a draggon, and made the sky to look dark with roaring. He also sware that he would try to be revenged on Mansoul for this. So they concluded to enter into consultation how they might get the town of Mansoul again.

Now, before this time, the day was come in which the prisoners in Mansoul were to be executed. So they were brought to the Cross, and that by Mansoul in most solemn manner; for the Prince said, that this should be done by the hand of the town of Mansoul, that I may see, said he, the forwardness of my now redeemed Mansoul to keep my word, and to do my commandments, and that I may bless Mansoul in doing this deed. Proof of sincerity pleases me well; let Mansoul therefore, first lay their hands upon these Diabolonians to destroy them.

So the town of Mansoul slew them according, to the word of their Prince. But when the prisoners were brought to the Cross to die, you can hardly believe what troublesome work Mansoul had of it to put the Diabolonians to death, (for the men knowing that they must die, and all of them having implacable enmity in their heart to Mansoul,) what did they, but took courage at the Cross, and there resisted the men of the town of Mansoul? Wherefore the men of Mansoul were forced to cry out for help to the captains and men of war. Now the great Shaddai had a secretary in the town, and he was a great lover of the men of Mansoul, and he was at the place of execution also; so he hearing the men of Mansoul cry out against the strugglings and unruliness of the prisoners, rose up from his place, and came and put his hands upon the hands of the men of Mansoul. So they crucified the Diabolonians, that had been a plague, a grief, and an offence, to the town of Mansoul.

Now, when this good work was done, the Prince came down to see, to visit, and to speak comfortably to the men of Mansoul, and to strengthen their hands in such work. And he said to them that by this act of theirs he had proved them and found them to be lovers of his person, observers of his laws, and such as also had respect to his honor. He said moreover, (to show them that they by this should not be the losers, nor their town weakened by the loss of them,) that he would make them another captain, and that one of themselves; and that this captain should be a ruler of a thousand, for the good and benefit of the now flourishing town of Mansoul,

So he called one whose name was Waiting, and bid him go quickly up to the castle-gate, and enquire there for one Mr. Experience, that waiteth upon that noble captain, the Captain Credence, and bid him come hither to me. So the messenger that waited upon the good Prince Emmanuel, went and said as he was commanded. Now, the young gentleman was waiting to see the captain train and muster his men in the castle-yard. Then said Mr. Waiting to him, "Sir, the Prince would that you should

come down to his Highness forthwith. So he brought him down to Emmanuel; and he came and made obeisance before him. Now the men of the town knew Mr. Experience well, for he was born and bred in Mansoul; they also knew him to be a man of conduct, of valour, and a person prudent in matters; he was also a comely person, well spoken, and very successful in his undertakings.

Wherefore the hearts of the townsmen were transported with joy, when they saw that the Prince himself was so taken with Mr. Experience that he needs would make him a captain.

So with one consent they bowed the knee before Emmanuel, and with a shout said, "Let Emmanuel live forever." Then said the Prince to the young gentlemen, whose name was Mr. Experience, "I have thought good to confer upon thee a place of trust and honor in this my town of Mansoul." Then the young man bowed his head and worshipped. "It is, said Emmanuel, that thou shouldest be a captain, a captain over a thousand men in my beloved town of Mansoul." Then said the captain, "Let the King live." So the Prince gave out orders forthwith to the King's secretary, that he should draw up for Mr. Experience a commission to make him a captain over a thousand men, and let it be brought to me, said he, that I may set to it my seal. So it was done as it was commanded; the commission was drawn up, brought to Emmanuel, and he set his seal thereto; then by the hand of Mr. Waiting he sent it away to the captain.

Now as soon as the captain had received his commission, he soundeth his trumpet for volunteers, and young men came to him apace, yea, the greatest and chiefest men in the town sent their sons to be listed under his command. Thus Captain Experience came under command to Emmanuel for the good of the town of Mansoul. He had for his lieutenant one Mr. Skillful, and for his cornet one Mr. Memory. His under officers I need not name. His colors were the white colors, for the town of Mansoul, and his escutcheon was the dead lion and the dead bear. So the Prince returned to his royal palace again.

Now, when he was returned thither, the elders of the town of Mansoul, to wit, my Lord-Mayor, the Recorder, and the Lord Willbewill, went to congratulate him, and in special way to thank him for his love, care, and tender compassion which he showed to his ever obliged town of Mansoul. So after a while, and some sweet communion between them, the townsmen having solemly ended their ceremony, returned to their place again.

Emmanuel also at this time appointed them a day wherein he would renew their charter, yea wherein he would renew and enlarge it, mending several faults therein, that Mansoul's yoke might be yet more easy. And this he did without any desire of theirs, even of his own frankness and noble mind. So when he had sent for, and seen their old one, he laid it by, and said, "Now that which decayeth and waxeth old, is ready to vanish away." He said moreover, "The town of Mansoul shall have another, a better, a new one, more steady and firm by far. An epitome whereof, take as follows:

"I, Emmanuel, Prince of Peace, and a great lover of the town of Mansoul, do in the name of my Father, and of mine own clemency, give, grant, and bequeath, to my beloved town of Mansoul,

"1. Free, full, and everlasting forgiveness of all wrongs, injuries, and offences, done by them against my Father, me, their neighbors, or themselves.

"2. I do give them the holy law, and my Testament, with all that therein is contained for their everlasting comfort and consolation.

"3. I do also give them a portion of the selfsame grace and goodness that dwells in my Father's heart and mine.

"4. I do give, grant, and bestow upon them freely, the world, and what is therein for their good: and they shall have that power over it, as shall stand with the honor of my Father, my glory, and their comfort; yea, I grant them the benefits of life and death, and of things present, and things to come. This privilege, no other city, town, or coporation shall have, but my Mansoul only.

"5. I do give and grant them leave, and free access, to me in my palace, at all seasons, there to make known their wants to me! And I give them moreover a promise, that I will hear and redress all their grievances.

"6. I do give, grant to, and invest the town of Mansoul, with full power and authority to seek out, take, enslave, and destroy all, and all manner of Diabolonians, that at any time, from whence soever, shall be found stragling in or about the town of Mansoul.

"7. I do further grant to my beloved town of Mansoul, that they shall have authority not to suffer any foreigner or stranger, or their seed, to be free in, and of, the blessed town of Mansoul; nor to share in the excellent priveileges thereof. But that all the grants, privileges, and immunities that I bestow upon the famous town of Mansoul; shall be for those the old natives, and true inhabitants thereof; to them I say, and to their right seed after them.

"But all Diabolonians, of what sort, birth,

country, or kingdom soever, shall be debarred a share therein."

So when the town of Mansoul had received at the hand of Emmanuel their gracious charter, (which in itself is infinitely more large than by this lean epitome is set before you,) they carried it to audience, that is, to the market-place, and there Mr. Recorder read it in the presence of all the people. This being done, it was had back to the castle-gates, and there fairly engraven upon the doors thereof, and laid in letters of gold, to the end that the town of Mansoul, with all the people thereof, might have it always in their view, or might go where they might see what a blessed freedom their Prince had bestowed upon them, that their joy might be increased in themselves, and their love renewed to their great and good Emmanuel.

But what joy! what comfort! what consolation! think you, did now possess the hearts of the men of Mansoul? The bells rang, the minstrels played, the captains shouted, the colors waved in the wind, and the silver trumpets sounded, and all the Diabolonians now were glad to hide their heads.

When this was over, the Prince sent again for the elders of the town of Mansoul, and communed with them about a ministry that he intended to establish among them; such a ministry that might open unto them, and instruct them in the things that did concern their present and future state.

For, said he, you of yourselves, without you have teachers, and guides, will not be able to know, and if not to know, to be sure, not to do, the will of my Father.

At this news, when the elders of Mansoul brought it to the people, the whole town came running together, (for it pleased them well, as whatever the Prince now did, pleased the people,) and all with one consent implored his Majesty, that he would forthwith establish such a ministry among them as might teach them both law and judgment, statute and commandment; that they might be documented in all good and wholesome things. So he told them, that he would grant them their request, and would establish two among them; one that was of his Father's court, and one that was a native of Mansoul.

He that is from the court, said he, is a person of no less quality and dignity than is my Father and I, and he is the Lord Chief Secretary of my Father's house; for he is and always has been the chief dictator of all my Father,s laws; a person altogether well skilled in all mysteries, and knowledge of mysteries, as is my Father, or as myself is. Indeed he is one with us in nature; and also as to loving of, and being faithful to and in, the eternal concerns of the town of Mansoul.

And this is he, said the Prince, that must be your chief teacher; for it is he, and he only that can teach you clearly in all high and supernatural things. He and he only it is that knows the ways and methods of my Father at court; nor can any like him show how the heart of my Father is at all times, in all things, upon all occasions, towards Mansoul; for as no man knows the things of a man, but the spirit of a man which is in him; so the things of my Father knows no man, but this his high and mighty secretary. Nor can any, as he, tell Mansoul how and what they shall do to keep themselves in the love of my Father. He also it is that can bring lost things to your remembrance, and that can tell you things to come. This teacher therefore must of necessity have pre-eminence (both in your affections and judgment) before your other teacher; his personal dignity, the excellency of his teaching, also the great dexterity that he hath to assist you to make and draw up petitions to my Father for your help and to his pleasing, must lay obligations upon you to love him, fear him, and to take heed that you grieve him not.

This person can put life and vigour into all he says; yea, and can also put it into your hearts. This person can make seers of you, and can make you tell what shall be hereafter. By this person you must frame all your petitions to my Father and me; and without his advice and counsel first obtained, let nothing enter into the town or castle of Mansoul, for that may disgust and grieve this noble person.

Take heed, I say, that you do not grieve this minister; for if you do, he may fight against you: and should he once be moved by you, to set himself against you in battle array; that will distress you more than if twelve legions should from my Father's court be sent to make war upon you.

But as I said, if you shall hearken unto him, and shall love him; if you shall devote yourselves to his teaching, and shall seek to have converse, and to maintain communion with him; you shall find him ten times better than is the whole world to any, yea, he will shed abroad the love of my Father in your hearts, and Mansoul will be the wisest and most blessed of all people.

Then did the Prince call unto him the old gentlemen, who before had been the Recorder of Mansoul, Mr. Conscience by name, and told him, That forasmuch as he was well skilled in the law and government of the town of Mansoul, and was also well spoken, and could pertinently deliver to them his Master's will in all terrene and domestic matters, therefore he would make him a minister for, in, and to the goodly town of Mansoul, in all the laws, statutes and judgments of the famous town of Man-

soul. And thou must, said the Prince confine thyself to the teaching of moral virtues, to civil and natural duties; but thou must not attempt or presume to be a revealer of those high and supernatural mysteries that are kept close in the bosom of Shaddai my Father; for those things knoweth no man, nor can any reveal them but my Father's Secretary only.

Thou art a native of the town of Mansoul, but the Lord Secretary is a native with my Father; wherefore, as thou hast knowledge of the laws and customs of the corporation, so he, of the things and will of my Father, wherefore, oh! Mr. Conscience, although I have made thee a minister and a preacher in the town of Mansoul; yet, as to the things which the Lord Secretary knoweth, and shall teach to this people, there thou must be his scholar and a learner even as the rest of Mansoul are.

Thou must therefore, in all high and supernatural things, go to him for information and knowledge; for though there be a spirit in man, this person's inspiration must give him understanding. Wherefore, oh! thou Mr. Recorder, keep low and be humble, and remember that the Diabolonians that kept not their first charge, but left their own standing, are now made prisoners in the pit; be therefore content with thy station.

I have made thee my Father's vicegerent on earth, in such things of which I have made mention before; and take thou power to teach them to Mansoul; yea, and to impose them with whips and chastisements, if they shall not willingly hearken to do thy commandments.

And, Mr. Recorder, because thou art old and feeble, therefore I give thee leave and license to go when thou wilt to my fountain, my conduit, and there to drink freely of the blood of my grape, for my conduit doth always run wine. Thus doing, thou shalt drive from thy heart and stomach all foul, gross and hurtful humors. It will also lighten thine eyes, and will strengthen thy memory for the reception and keeping of all that the King's most noble Secretary teacheth.

When the Prince had thus put Mr. Recorder (that once so was) into the place and office of a minister of Mansoul, and the man had thankfully accepted thereof, then did Emmanuel address himself to the townsmen themselves.

"Behold (said the Prince to Mansoul) my love and care towards you, I have added to all that is past, this mercy to appoint you preachers; the most noble Secretary to teach you in all high and sublime mysteries; and this gentlemen (pointing to Mr. Conscience) is to teach you in all things human and domestic; for therein lieth his work. He is not, by what I have said, debarred of telling to Mansoul any thing that he hath heared and received at the mouth of the Lord High Secretary; only he shall not attempt or presume to be a revealer of those high mysteries himself; for the breaking of them up, and the discovery of them to Mansoul, lieth only in the power, authority, and skill of the Lord High Secretary himself. Talk of them he may; and so may the rest of the town of Mansoul as they have opportunity, press them upon each other for the benefit of the whole. These things, therefore, I would have you observe and do, for it is for your life, and lengthening of your days.

"And one thing more to my beloved town of Mansoul: You must not dwell in, nor stay upon any thing of that which he hath in commission to teach you, as to your trust and expectation of the next world; of the next world I say, for I purpose to give another to Mansoul, when this with them is worn out; but for that you must wholly and solely have recourse to, and make stay upon, this doctrine, which is your teacher after the first order. Yea, Mr. Recorder himself, must not look for life from that which he himself revealeth; his dependence for that must be founded in the doctrine of the other preacher. Let Mr. Recorder also take heed that he receive not any doctrine, or point of doctrine, that is not communicated to him by his superior teacher; nor yet within the precincts of his own formal knowledge."

Now after the Prince had thus settled things in the famous town of Mansoul, he proceeded to give to the elders of the corporation a necessary caution, to wit, how they should carry it to the high and noble captains that he had from his Father's court sent or brought with him to the famous town of Mansoul.

"These captains (said he) do love the town of Mansoul, and they are picked men, picked out of abundance, as men that best suit, and that will most faithfully serve in the wars of Shaddai against the Diabolonians, for the preservation of the town of Mansoul. I charge you, therefore, (said he) O ye inhabitants of the now flourishing town of Mansoul, that you carry it not ruggedly, or untowardly to my captains, or their men; since, as I said, they are picked and choice men, men chosen out of many for the good of the town of Mansoul. I say, I charge you, that you carry it not ruggedly or untowardly to them; for though they have the hearts and faces of lions, when at any time they shall be called forth to engage and fight with the King's foes, and the enemies of the town of Mansoul; yet a little discountenance cast upon them from the town of Mansoul, will deject and cast down their faces, will weaken and take away

their courage. Do not, therefore, O my beloved, carry it unkindly to my valiant captains, and courageous men of war, but love them, nourish them, succour them, and lay them in your bosoms, and they will not only fight for you, but cause to fly from you all those the Diabolonians that seek; and will, if possible, be your utter destruction.

"If therefore any of them should, at any time, be sick or weak, and so not able to perform that office of love, which with all their hearts they are willing to do, (and will do also when well and in health,) slight them not nor despise them, but rather strengthen them and encourage them, though weak and ready to die; for they are your fence and your guard, your walls, gates, locks and bars. And although when they are weak, they can do but litle, but rather need to be helped by you, (than that you should then expect great things from them,) yet when well, you now what exploits, what feats and warlike achievements they are able to do, and will perform for you.

"Besides, if they be weak, the town of Mansoul cannot be strong; if they be strong, then Mansoul cannot be weak; your safety therefore doth lie in their health, and in your countenancing of them. Remember also, that if they be sick, they catch that disease of the town of Mansoul itself.

"These things I have said unto you, because I love your welfare and your honor: Observe, therefore, O my Mansoul, to be punctual in all things that I have given in charge unto you, and that not only as a town corporate, and so to your officers and guard, and guides in chief, but to you as a people whose well-being, as single persons, depends on the observation of the orders and commandments of their Lord.

"Next, O my Mansoul, I do warn you of that of which notwithstanding the reformation which that at present is wrought among you, you have need to be warned about; wherefore hearken diligently unto me. I am now sure, and you will know hereafter, that there are yet some of the Diabolonians remaining in the town of Mansoul, Diabolonians that are sturdy and implacable, and that do, already, while I am yet with you, and that will yet more when I am from you, studdy, plot, contrive, invent, and jointly attempt to bring you to desolation, so to a state far worse than that of Egyptian bondage; they are the avowed friends of Diabolus, therefore look about you; they used therefore to lodge with their prince in the castle, when Incredulity was Lord-Mayor of this town; but since my coming hither, they lie more in the outsides and walls, and have made themselves dens, and caves and holes, and strong holds therein. Wherefore, O Mansoul, thy work as to this will be so much the more difficult and hard. That is, to take, mortify, and put them to death, according to the will of my Father. Nor can you utterly rid yourselves of them, unless you should pull down the walls of your town, the which I am by no means willing you should. Do you ask me what shall we do then? Why, be you dilligent, and quit you like men, observe their holds, find out their haunts, assault them, and make no peace with them. Wherever they haunt, lurk, or abide, and what terms of peace soever they offer you, abhor, and all shall be well betwixt you and me. And, that you may the better know them from those that are the natives of the town of Mansoul, I will give you this brief schedule of the names of the chief of them; and they are these that follow: The Lord Fornication, the Lord Adultery, the Lord Murder, the Lord Anger, the Lord Lasciviousness, the Lord Deceit, the Lord Evil-eye, Mr. Drunkeness, Mr. Revelling, Mr. Idolatry, Mr. Witchcraft, Mr. Variance, Mr. Emulation, Mr. Wrath, Mr. Strife, Mr. Sedition, and Mr. Heresy. These are some of the chief, O Mansoul! of those that will seek to overthrow thee for ever. These, I say, are the shucklers in Mansoul, but look thou well into the law of thy King, and there thou shalt find their physiognomy, and such other characteristical notes of them by which they certainly may be known.

"These, O my Mansoul, (and I would gladly that you should know it,) if they are suffered to run and range about the town at will, will quickly, like vipers, eat out your bowels, yea, poison your captains, cut the sinews of your soldiers, break the bars and bolts of your gates, and turn your now most flourishing Mansoul into a berren and desolate wilderness, a ruinous heap. Wherefore, that you may take courage to yourselves, to apprehend these villains wherever you find them, I give to you my Lord-Mayor, my Lord Willbewill, and Mr. Recorder, with all the inhabitants of the town of Mansoul, full power and commission to seek out, to take, and cause to be put to death by the cross, all manner of Diabolonians, wherever you shall find them to lurk within, or to range without, the walls of the town of Mansoul.

"I told you before, that I had placed a standing ministry among you; not that you have but these with you, for my four first captains who came against the master and lord of the Diabolonians that was in Mansoul, they can, and if need be, will not only privatly inform, but publicly preach to the corporation, both good and wholesome doctrine, and such as shall lead you in the way. Yea, they will set up a weekly, yea, if need be, a daily lecture in thee, O Mansoul! and will instruct thee in such profitable lessons, that if heeded, will do thee good at the end.

And take good heed that you spare not the men that you have a commission to take and crucify.

"Now as I have set before your eyes the vagrants and runagates by name, so I will tell you, that among yourselves some of them shall creep in to beguile you, even such as would seem, and that in appearance, are very rife and hot for religion. And they, if you watch not, will do you a mischief, such an one as at present you do not think of.

"These, as I said, will show themselves to you in another hue than those under description before. Wherefore Mansoul, watch and be sober, and suffer not thyself to be betrayed."

When the Prince had thus far new-modelled the town of Mansoul, and had instructed them in such matters as were profitable for them to know, then he appointed another day, in which he intended, when the townsfolk came together, to bestow a further badge of honor upon the town of Mansoul: a badge that should distinguish them from all people, kindreds, and tongues, that dwell in the kingdom of Universe. Now it was not long before the day appointed was come, and the Prince and his people met in the King's palace, where first Emmanuel made a short speech unto them, and then did for them as he had said, and unto them as he had promised.

"My Mansoul, said he, that which I now am about to do, is to make you known to the world to be mine, and to distinguish you also in your own eyes from all false traitors that may creep in among you.

Then he commanded that those that waited upon him should go and bring forth out of his treasury those white glittering robes that I, said he, have provided and laid up in store for my Mansoul. So the white garments were fetched out of his treasury, and laid forth to the eyes of the people. Moreover it was granted to them, that they should take them and put them on. So the people were put into white, into fine linen, white and clean.

Then said the Prince unto them, "This, O Mansoul, is my livery, and the badge by which mine are known from the servants of others.—Yea, it is that which I grant to all that are mine, and without which no man is permitted to see my face. Wear them therefore, for my sake, who gave them unto you; and also if you would be known by the world to be mine."

But now can you think, how Mansoul shone? It was fair as the sun, clear as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners. The Prince added further, and said, "No prince, potentate, or mighty one of Universe, giveth this livery but myself. Behold, therefore, as I said before, you shall be known by it to be mine.

"And now," said he, "I have given you my livery, let me give you also in commandment concerning them; and be sure that you take good heed to my words.

"1. Wear them daily, day by day, lest you should at sometimes appear to others as if you were none of mine.

"2. Keep them always white; for it is, if they be soiled, dishonor to me.

"3. Wherefore gird them up from the ground, and let them not be soiled with dust and dirt.

"4. Take heed that you lose them not, lest you walk naked and they see your shame.

"5. But if you should sully them, if you should defile them, (the which I am greatly unwilling you should, and the Prince Diabolus would be glad if you would,) then speed you to do that which is written in my law, that yet you may stand, and not fall before me, and before my throne. Also this is the way to cause that I may not leave you nor forsake you while here, but may dwell in this town of Mansoul for ever."

And now was Mansoul, and the inhabitants of it as the signet upon Emmanuel's right hand. Where was there now a town, a city, a corporation, that could compare with Mansoul? A town redeemed from the hand and from the power of Diabolus. A town that the King Shaddai loved, and that he sent Emmanuel to regain from the Prince of the infernal cave; yea, a town, that Emmanuel loved to dwell in, and that he chose for his royal habitation; a town that he fortified for himself, and made strong by the force of his army. What shall I say? Mansoul has now a most excellent Prince, golden captains and men of war, weapons proved, and garments white as snow. Nor are these benefits to be counted little, but great. Can the town of Mansoul esteem them so, and improve them to that end and purpose for the which they are bestowed upon them?

When the Prince had thus completed the modelling of the town, to show that he had great delight in the work of his hands, and took pleasure in the good that he had wrought for the famous and flourishing Mansoul, he commanded, and they set his standard upon the battlements of the castle. And then,

1. He gave them frequent visits. Not a day now but the elders of Mansoul must come to him, or he to them, into his palace. Now they must walk and talk together of all the great things that he had done, and yet further promised to do for the town of Mansoul. Thus would he often do with the Lord-Mayor, my Lord Willbewill, and the honest subordinate preacher, Mr. Con-

science, and Mr. Recorder.—But oh! how graciously, how lovingly, how courteously, and tenderly, did this blessed Prince now carry it towards the town of Mansoul! in all the streets, gardens, orchards, and other places where he came, to be sure the poor should have his blessing and benediction; yea, he would kiss them, and if they were ill he would lay hands on them, and make them well. The captains also he would daily, yea sometimes hourly, encourage with his presence and goodly words. For you must know, that a smile from him upon them, would put more vigor, more life and stoutness into them, than would anything else under heaven.

The Prince would now also feast them, and be with them continually. Hardly a week would pass but a banquet must be had betwixt him and them. You may remember that some pages before, we made mention of one feast that they had together, but now to feast them was a thing more common: every day with Mansoul was a feast-day now. Nor did he, when they returned to their places, send them empty away; either they must have a ring, a gold chain, a bracelet, a white stone, or something; so dear was Mansoul to him now! so lovely was Mansoul in his eyes!

2. When the elders and townsmen did not come to him, he would send in such plenty of provision unto them, meat that came from court, wine and bread that were prepared for his Father's table; yea, such delicacies would he send unto them, and therewith would so cover their table, that whoever saw it, confessed that the like could not be seen in any kingdom.

3. If Mansoul did not frequently visit him as he desired they should, he would walk out to them, knock at their doors, and desire entrance, that amity might be maintained betwixt them and him; if they did hear and open to him, as commonly they would if they were at home, then would he renew his former love, and confirm it too with some new tokens and signs of continual favor.

And was it not now amazing to behold, that in that very place where sometimes Diabolus had his abode, and entertained his Diabolonians to the almost utter destruction of Mansoul, the Prince of princes should sit eating and drinking with them, while all his mighty captains, men of war, trumpeters, with the singing men and singing women of his Father, stood round about to wait upon them! Now did Mansoul's cup run over, now did her conduits run sweet wine, now did she eat the finest of the wheat, and drink milk and honey out of the rock! Now she said, How great is his goodness, for since I found favor in his eyes, how honorable have I been!

The blessed Prince did also order a new officer in the town, and a goodly person he was, his name was Mr. God's-peace; this man was, set over my Lord Willbewill, my Lord Mayor, Mr. Recorder, the subordinate Preacher, Mr Mind, and over all the natives of the town of Mansoul. Himself was not a native of it but came with the Prince Emmanuel from the court. He was a great acquaintance of Captain Credence, and Captain Good-hope; some say they were akin, and I am of that opinion too. This man, as I said was made governor of the town in general, especially over the castle, and Captain Credence was to help him there. And I made great observation of it, that so long as all things went in Mansoul as this sweet natured gentleman would, the town was in most happy condition. Now there were no jars, no chiding, no interferings, no unfaithful doings in all the town of Mansoul, every man in Mansoul kept close to his own employment. The gentry, the officers, the soldiers, and all in the place, observed their order. And as for the women and children of the town, they followed their business joyfully; they would work and sing from morning till night; so that quite through the town of Mansoul now, nothing was to be found but harmony, quietness, joy and health. And this lasted all that summer.

But there was a man in the town of Mansoul, and his name was Mr. Carnal-securty. This man did, after all this mercy bestowed on this corporation, bring the town of Mansoul into great and grievious slavery and bondage. A brief account of him and of his doings, take as followeth.

When Diabolus at first took possession of the town of Mansoul, he brought thither with himself a great number of Diabolonians, men of his own conditions. Now among these there was one whose name was Mr. Self-conceit, and a notable brisk man he was, as any that did in those days possess the town of Mansoul. Diabolus then perceiving this man to be active and bold, sent him upon many desperate designs, the which he managed better, and more to the pleasing of his lord than most that came with him from the dens could do. Wherefore finding of him so fit for his purpose, he preferred him, and made him next to the great Lord Willbewill of whom we have written so much before. Now the Lord Willbewill being in those days very well pleased with him, and with his achievements, gave him his daughter the Lady Fear-nothing to wife. Now of my Lady Fear-nothing did this Mr. Self-conceit beget this gentleman, Mr. Carnal-Security. Wherefore there being then in Mansoul those strange kinds of mixtures, it was hard for them in some cases to find out who

were natives and who not; for Mr. Carnal-Security sprang from my Lord Willbewill by his mother's side though he had for his father a Diabolonian by nature.

Well, this Carnal-security took much after his father and mother; he was self-conceited, he feared nothing, he was also a very busy man; nothing of news, nothing of doctrine, nothing of alteration, or talk of alteration, could at any time be on foot in Mansoul, but be sure Mr. Carnal-security would be at the head or tail of it; but to be sure, he would decline those that he deemed the weakest, and stood always with them (in his way of standing) that he supposed was the strongest side.

Now, when Shaddai the mighty, and Emmanuel his Son, made war upon Mansoul to take it, this Mr. Carnal-security was then in town, and was a great doer among the people, encouraging them in their rebellion, putting of them upon hardening themselves in their resisting of the King's forces; but when he saw that the town of Mansoul was taken, and converted to the use of the glorious Prince Emmanuel, and when he also saw what was become of Diabolus, and how he was unroosted, and made to quit the castle in the greatest contempt and scorn, and that the town of Mansoul was well lined with captains, engines of war, and men, and also provisions, what doth he but slily wheel about also; and as he had served Diabolus against the good Prince, so he feigned that he would serve the Prince against his foes.

And having got some little smattering of Emmanuel's things by the end, being bold, he ventures himself into the company of the townsmen, and attempts also to chat among them. Now he knew that the power and strength of the town of Mansoul was great, and that it could not but be pleasing to the people if he cried up their might and their glory. Wherefore he beginneth his tale with the power and strength of Mansoul, and affirmed that it was impregnable. Now magnifying their captains, and their slings, and their rams, then crying up their fortifications and strong holds; and, lastly, the assurance that they had from their Prince, that Mansoul should be happy for ever. But when he saw that some of the men of the town were tickled and taken with his discourse, he makes it his business, and walking from street to street, house to house, and man to man, he at last brought Mansoul to dance after his pipe, and to grow almost as carnally secure as himself; so from talking they went to feasting, and from feasting to sporting; and so to some other matters, (now Emmanuel was yet in the town of Mansoul, and he wisely observed their doings.) My Lord-Mayor, My Lord Willbewill, and Mr. Recorder, were also all taken with the words of this tattling Diabolonian gentleman, forgetting that their Prince had give them warning before to take heed that they were not beguiled with any Diabolonian sleight; he had further told them, that the security of the now flourishing town of Mansoul did not so much lie in her present fortifications and force, as in her so using of what she had, as might oblige her Emmanuel, to abide within her castle. For the right doctrine of Emmanuel was, that the town of Mansoul should take heed that they forget not his Father's love and his; also that they should so demean themselves as to continue to keep themselves therein. Now this was not the way to do it, namely, to fall in love with one of the Diabolonians, and with such an one too as Mr. Carnal-security was, to be led up and down by the nose by him. They should have heard their Prince, feared their Prince, loved their Prince, and have stoned this naughty pack to death, and took care to have walked in the ways of their Prince's prescribing, for then should their peace have been as a river, when their righteousness had been like the waves of the sea.

Now when Emmanuel perceived, that through the policy of Mr. Carnal-security, the hearts of the men of Mansoul were chilled and abated in their practical love to him:

First he bemoans them, and condoles their state with the secretary, saying, "O that my people had hearkened unto me, and that Msnsoul had walked in my ways! I would have fed them with the finest of the wheat, and with honey out of the rock would I have sustained them." This done, he said in his heart, "I will return to the court, and go to my place, till Mansoul shall consider and acknowledge their offence." And he did so, and the cause and manner of his going away from them was thus:

The cause was for that,

First, Mansoul declined him, as is manifest in these particulars:

1. They left off their former way of visiting of him, they came not to his royal palace as afore.

2. They did not regard, nor yet take notice that he came, or came not, to visit them.

3. The love-feasts that had wont to be between their Prince and them, though he made them still, and called them to them, yet they neglected to come to them, or to be delighted with them.

4. They waited not for his counsels, but began to be headstrong and confident in themselves, concluding, that now they were strong and invincible, and that Mansoul was secure, and beyond all reach of the foe, that her state must needs be unalterable for ever.

Now, as was said, Emmanuel perceiv-

ing, that by the craft, of Mr. Carnal-security, the town of Mansoul was taken off from their dependance upon him, and upon his Father by him, and set upon what by them was bestowed upon it, he first, as I said, bemoaned their state, then he used means to make them understand, that the way they went on in was dangerous. For he sent my Lord High Secretary to them, to forbid them such ways; but twice when he came to them he found them at dinner in Mr. Carnal-security's parlour, and perceiving also that they were not willing to reason about matters concerning their good, he took grief and went his way. The which when he had told to the Prince Emmanuel, he took offence, and was grieved also, and so made provision to return to his Father's court.

Now the methods of his withdrawing, as I was saying before, were thus:

1. Even while he was yet with them in Mansoul, he kept himself close, and more retired than formerly.

2. His speech was not now, if he came in their company, so pleasant and familiar as formerly.

3. Nor did he, as in times past, send to Mansoul from his table those dainty bits which he was wont to do.

4. Nor, when they came to visit him, as now and then they would, would he be so easily spoken with as they found him to be in times past. They might knock once, yea twice, but he would seem not all to regard them; whereas, formerly, at the sound of their feet, he would up and run, and meet them half way, and take them too, and lay them in his bosom.

But thus Emmanuel carried it now, and by this his carriage he thought to make them bethink themselves and return to him. But alas, they did not consider, they did not now his ways, they regarded not, they were not touched with these, nor with the true remembrance of former favors.—Wherefore, what does he but in private manner withdraw himself, first from his palace, then to the gate of the town, and so away from Mansoul he goes, till they should acknowledge their offence, and more earnestly seek his face. Mr. God's-peace also laid down his commission, and would for the present act no longer in the town of Mansoul.

Thus they walked contrary to him, and he again, by way of retaliation, walked contrary to them. But alas, by this time they were so hardened in their way, and had so drunk in the doctrine of Mr. Carnal-security, that the departing of their Prince touched them not, nor was he remembered by them when gone; and so of consequence his absence not condoled by them.

Now there was a day wherein this old gentleman, Mr. Carnal-security, did again make a feast for the town of Mansoul, and there was at that time in the town one Mr. Godly-fear, one now but little set by, though formerly one of great request. This man, old Carnal-security, had a mind, if possible, to gull, and debauch, and abuse, as he did the rest; and therefore he now bids him to the feast with his neighbours; so the day being come, they prepare, and he goes and appears with the rest of the guests; and being all set at the table, they did eat and drink, and were merry, even all but this one man. For Mr. Godly-fear sat like a stranger, and did neither eat, nor was merry. The which, when Mr. Carnal-security perceived, he presently addressed himself in a speech thus to him:

Carn. Mr. Godly-fear, are you not well? you seem to be ill of body or mind, or both. I have a cordial of Mr. Forget-good's making, the which, Sir, if you will take a dram of, I hope it may make you bonny and blithe, and so make you more fit for us feasting companions.

Godly. Unto whom the old gentleman discreetly replied: Sir, I thank you for all things courteous and civil, but for your cordial I have no list thereto. But a word to the natives of Mansoul: You, the elders and chiefs of Mansoul, to me it is strange to see you so jocund and merry, when the town of Mansoul is in such woful case.

Carn. Then said Mr. Carnal-security, you want sleep good Sir, I doubt. If you please, lie down and take a nap, and we, meanwhile, will be merry.

Godly. Then said the good man as follows: Sir, if you were not destitute of an honest heart, you could not do as you have done, and do.

Carn. Then said Mr. Carnal-security, Why?

Godly. Nay, pray interrupt me not. It is true, the town of Mansoul was strong, and (with a provisio) impregnable; but, you the townsmen have weakened it, and it now lies obnoxious to its foes. Nor is it a time to flatter, or be silent. It is you, Mr. Carnal-security, that have wittily stripped Mansoul, and driven her glory from her; you have pulled down her towers, you have broken down her gates, you have spoiled her locks and bars.

And now to explain myself, from that time that my Lords of Mansoul and you, Sir, grew so great, from that time the Strength of Mansoul has been offended, and now he is risen and is gone. If any shall question the truth of my words, I will answer him by this and such questions: Where is the Prince Emmanuel? When did a man or woman in Mansoul see him? When did you hear from him, or taste any of his dainty bits? You are now a feasting

with this Diabolonian monster, but he is not your Prince. I say therefore, though enemies from without, had you taken heed, could not have made a pray of you, yet since you have sinned against your Prince, your enemies within have been too hard for you.

Carn. Then said Mr. Carnal-security, Fie, fie, Mr. Godly-fear, fie! Will you never shake off your timorousness? Are you afraid of being sparrow-blasted? Who hath hurt you? Behold I am on your side, only you are for doubting, and I am for being confident. Besides, is this a time to be sad in? A feast is made for mirth; why then do you now, to your shame and our trouble, break out into such passionate, melancholy language, when you should eat and drink, and be merry?

Godly. Then said Mr. Godly-fear again, I may well be sad, for Emmanuel is gone from Mansoul. I say again, he is gone, and you, Sir, are the man that has driven him away. Yea, he is gone without so much as acquainting the nobles of Mansoul with his going; and if that is not a sign of his anger, I am not acquainted with the methods of godliness.

And now, my Lords and gentlemen, for my speech is still to you, your gardual declining from him did provoke him to depart from you; the which he did gradually, if perhaps you would have been made sensible thereby, and have been renewed by humbling of yourselves; but when he saw that none would regard nor lay these fearful beginnings of his anger and judgment to heart, he went away from, this place; and this I saw with mine own eyes. Wherefore, now while you boast, your strength is gone, you are like the man that had lost his locks, that before did wave about his shoulders. You may with this Lord of your feast, shake yourselves and conclude to do as at other times; but since without him you can do nothing, and he is departed from you, turn your feast into a sigh, and your mirth into lamentation.

Then the Subordinate Preacher, old Mr. Conscience by name, he that of old was Recorder of Mansoul, being startled at what was said, began to second it thus:

Con. Indeed, my brethen, quoth he, I fear that Mr. Godly-fear tells us true. I for my part have not seen my Prince for a long season. I cannot remember the day for my part. Nor can I answer Mr. Godly-fear's question. I am afraid that all is naught with Mansoul.

Godly. Nay, I know that you should not find him in Mansoul, for he is departed and gone; yea, and gone for the faults of the elders, and for that they rewarded his grace with unsufferable unkindnesses.

Then did the Subordinate Preacher look as if he would fall down dead at the table; also all there present except the man of the house, began to look pale and wan: But having a little recovered themselves, and jointly agreeing to believe Mr. Godly-fear and his sayings, they began to consult what was best to be done, (now Mr. Carnal-security was gone into his withdrawing room, for he liked not such dumpish doings,) both to the man of the house for drawing them into evil, and also to recover Emmanuel's love.

Then the saying of their Prince came very hot into their minds, concerning the false prophets, that should arise to delude the town of Mansoul. So they took Mr. Carnal-security, (concluding that he was the person,) and burnt his house upon him with fire; for he also was a Diabolonian by nature.

When this was past and over, they bespeed themselves to look for Emmanuel their Prince; and they sought him but found him not. Then were they more confirmed in the truth of Mr. Godly-fear's sayings, and began also severely to reflect upon themselves for their so vile and ungodly doings; for they concluded now it was through them that their Prince had left them.

Then they agreed, and went to my Lord Secretary, (whom before they refused to hear, and had grieved with their doings,) to know of him, for he was a seer, and could tell where Emmanuel was, and how they might direct a petition to him. But the Lord Secretary would not admit them to a conference about this matter, nor would admit them to his royal palace, nor come out to them, to show them his face or intelligence.

And now it was a day gloomy and dark, a day of clouds and of thick darkness with Mansoul. Now they saw that they had been foolish, and began to perceive what the company and prattle of Mr. Carnal security had done, and what desperate damage his swaggering words had brought poor Mansoul into. But what further it was like to cost them, that they were ignorant of. Now Mr. Godly-fear began again to be in repute with the men of the town; yea, they were ready to look upon him as a prophet.

Well, when the sabbath-day was come, they went to hear their Subordinate Preacher; but oh! how did it thunder and lighten this day! His text was that in the prophet Jonah, *They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercies.* But there was then such power and authority in that sermon, and such a dejection seen in the countenances of the people that day, that the like had seldom been heard or seen. The people, when the sermon was done, were

scarce able to go to their homes, or betake themselves to their employers the week after, they were so sermon-smitten, and also so sermon-sick, that they knew not what to do.

He not only shewed Mansoul their sin, but trembled before them under a sense of his own, still crying out of himself as he preached to them, "Unhappy man that I am! that I should do so wicked a thing! that I, a preacher, whom the Prince did set up to teach to Mansoul his law, should myself live senseless and sottishly here, and be one of the first found in transgression! This transgression also fell within my precincts. I should have cried out against the wickedness; but I let Mansoul lie wallowing in it, untill it had driven Emmanuel from its borders." With these things he also charged all the lords and gentry of Mansoul, to the almost distracting of them.

About this time also there was a great sickness in the town of Mansoul; and most of the inhabitants were greatly afflicted; yea, the captains also, and men of war, were brought thereby to a languishing condition, and that for a long time together; so that in case of an invasion, nothing could to purpose now have been done either by the townsmen or field-officers. Oh! how many pale faces, weak hands, feeble knees, and staggering men, were now seen to walk the streets of Mansoul. Here were groans, there pants, and yonder lay those that were ready to faint.

The garments too which Emmanuel had given them were but in a sorry case; some were rent, some were torn and all in a nasty condition; some also hung so loosely upon them, that the next bush they came at was ready to pluck them off.

After some time spent in this sad and desolate condition, the Subordinate Preacher called for a day of fasting, and to humble themselves for being so wicked against the great Shaddai and his Son. And he desired that Captain Boanerges would preach. So he consented to do it; and the day was come, and his text was this, *Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?* and a very smart sermon he made upon the place. First he showed what was the occasion of the words; to wit, because the fig-tree was barren; then he showed what was contained in the sentence; to wit, repentance, or utter desolation. He then showed also, by whose authority this sentence was pronounced; and that was by Shaddai himself. And lastly, he showed the reasons of the point; and then concluded his sermon. But he was very pertinent in the application, insomuch that he made poor Mansoul tremble. For this sermon, as well as the former, wrought much upon the hearts of the men of Mansoul; yea, it greatly helped to keep awake those that were roused by the preaching that went before. So that now, throughout the whole town, there was little or nothing to be heard or seen, but sorrow, and mourning, and woe.

Now after the sermon they got together, and consulted what was best to be done. But, said the Subordinate Preacher, I will do nothing of mine own head, without advising with my neighbor Mr. Godly-fear. So they called, and sent for Mr. Godly-fear, and he forthwith appeared; then they desired that he would further show his opinion about what they had best to do. Then said the old gentleman as followeth; "It is my opinion, that this town of Mansoul should, in this day of her distress, draw up and send an humble petition to their offended Prince Emmanuel, that he, in his favor and grace, will turn again unto you. and not keep anger for ever."

When the townsmen had heard this speech, they did, with one consent, agree to his advice; so they presently did draw up their request; and the next question was, but who shall carry it? At last, they did all agree to send it by my Lord-Mayor, So he accepted of the service, and addressed himself to his journey, and went, and came to the court of Shaddai, whither Emmanuel the Prince of Mansoul was gone. But the gate was shut, and strict watch kept thereat, so that the petitioner was forced to stand without for a great while together. Then he desired that some would go in to the Prince, and tell him who stood at the gate, and what his business was. So one went, and told to Shaddai, and to Emmanuel his Son, that the Lord Mayor of the town of Mansoul stood without at the gate of the King's court, desiring to be admitted into the presence of the Prince, the King's Son. He also told what was the Lord-Mayor's errand, both to the King and his Son Emmanuel. But the Prince would not come down, nor admit that the gate should be opened to him; but sent him an answer to this effect: They have turned their back unto me, and not their face; but now, in the time of their trouble, they say unto me, Arise, and save us. But can they not now go to Mr. Carnal-security, to whom they went when they turned from me, and make him their leader, their lord, and their protector, now in their trouble? Why now in their trouble, do they visit me, since, in their prosperity, they went astray?"

This answer made my Lord-Mayor look black in the face; it troubled, it perplexed, it rent him sore. And now he began again to see what it was to be familiar with Diabolonians, such as Mr. Carnal-security was. when he saw that at court, as yet, there was little help to be expected, either for himself or friends in Mansoul, he smote

upon his breast, and returned weeping, and all the way bewailing the lamentable state of Mansoul.

Well, when he was come within sight of the town, the elders and chief of the people of Mansoul went out at the gate to meet him, and to salute him; and to know how he sped at court. But he told them his tale in so doleful a manner, that they all cried out, and mourned, and wept. Wherefore they threw ashes and dust upon their heads, and put sackcloth upon their loins, and went crying out through the town of Mansoul; the which when the rest of the townsfolk saw, they all mourned and wept. This therefore was a day of rebuke and trouble, and of anguish to the town of Mansoul; and also of great distress.

After some time, when they had somewhat refrained themselves, they came together to consult again what by them was yet to be done; and they asked advice, as they did before, of that Rev. Mr. Godly-fear, who told them, that there was no way better than to do as they had done, nor would he that they should be discouraged at all with what they had met with at court; yea, though several of their petitions should be answered with nought but silence or rebuke; for, said he, it is the way of the wise Shaddai to make men wait, and to exercise patience; and it should be the way of them in want, to be willing to stay his leisure.

Then they took courage, and sent again, and again, and again; for there was not a day, nor an hour, that went over Mansoul's head, wherein a man might not have met upon the road one or other riding posts, from Mansoul to the court of King Shaddai; and all with letters petitionary in behalf of, and for the Prince's return to Mansoul.

The road, I say, was now full of messengers, going and returning, and meeting one another, some from the court, and some from Mansoul: and this was the work of the miserable town of Mansoul, all that long, that sharp, that cold and tedious winter.

Now, you may remember that I told you before, that after Emmanuel had taken Mansoul, yea, and after he had new-Modelled the town, there remained in several lurking-places of the corporation many of the old Diabolonians, that either came with the tyrant when he invaded and took the town, or that had thereby reason of unlawful mixtures, their birth in breeding, and bringing up, their holes, dens, and lurking-places in, under, or about the wall of the town. Some of their names are, the Lord Fornication, the Lord Adultery, the Lord Murder, the Lord Anger, the Lord Lasciviousness, the Lord Deceit, the Lord Evil-eye, the Lord Blasphemy, and that horrible villian the old and dangerous Lord Covetousness. These, with many more, had yet their abode in the town of Mansoul after Emmanuel had driven their prince Diabolus out of the castle.

Against these the good Prince did grant a commission to the Lord Willbewill and others; yea, to the whole town of Mansoul, to seek, take, secure, and destroy any, or all that they could lay hands on; for that they were Diabolonians by nature, enemies to the Prince, and those who sought to ruin the blessed town of Mansoul. But Mansoul did not pursue this warrant, but neglected to look after, to apprehend, to secure, and to destroy these Diabolonians. Wherefore, what do these villians but by degrees take courage to, and show themselves to the inhabitants of the town; yea, and as I was told, some of the men of the town of Mansoul grew too familiar with several of them, to the sorrow of the corporation, as you will hear more of in time and place.

Well, when the Diabolonian lords that were left, perceived that Mansoul had, through sinning, offended Emmanuel their Prince, and that he had withdrawn himself and was gone, what do they but plot the ruin of the town of Mansoul. So upon a time they met together, at the hold of one Mr. Mischief, (who also was a Diabolonian,) and there consulted how they might deliver up Mansoul into the hands of Diabolus again. Now some advised one way, and some another, every man according to his own liking. At last My Lord Lasciviousness proposed, that some of the Diabolonians in Mansoul, should offer themselves for servants to some of the natives of the town; For, said he, if they so do, and Mansoul shall accept of them, they may for us, and for Diabolus our lord, make the taking of the town of Mansoul more easy than otherwise it would be. But then stood up the Lord Murder, and said, This may not be done at this time, for Mansoul is now in a kind of rage; because by our friend Mr. Carnal-security, she hath been once ensnared already, and made to offend against her Prince; and how shall she reconcile herself unto her Lord again, but by the heads of these men? Besides, we know that they have in commission to take and slay us wherever they shall find us; let us, therefore, be wise as foxes; when we are dead we can do them no hurt, but while we live we may. Thus when they had tossed the matter to and fro, they jointly agree that a letter should forthwith be sent away to Diabolus in their name, by which the state of the town of Mansoul should be shewed him, and how much it is under the frowns of their Prince; we may also, said some, let him know our inten-

tions, and ask of him his advice in the case.

So this letter was presently framed; the contents of which were these:

To our Great Lord, the Prince Diabolus, dwelling below in the Infernal Cave.

O GREAT Father, and mighty Prince Diabolus, We, the true Diabolonians, yet remaining in the rebellious town of Mansoul, having received our beings from thee, and our nourishment at thy hands, cannot with content and quiet endure to behold as we do this day, how thou art dispraised, disgraced, and reproached, among the inhabitants of this town; nor is thy long abscence at all delightful to us, because greatly to our detriment.

The reason of this our writing unto our Lord is, for that we are not altogether without hope that this town may become thy habitation again; for it is greatly declined from its Prince Emmanuel, and he is up risen, and is departed from them; yea, and though they send, and send, and send, and send after him to return to them, yet can they not prevail, nor get good words from him.

There has been also of late, and is yet remaining a very great sickness and fainting among them, and that not only upon the poorer sort of the town, but upon the lords, captains, and chief gentry of the place; (we only, who are Diabolonians by nature, remain well, lively, and strong;) so that through their great transgression on the one hand, and their dangerous sickness on the other, we judge they lie open to thy hand and power. If, therefore, it shall stand with thy horrible cunning, and with the cunning of the rest of the princes with thee, to come and make an attempt to take Mansoul again, send us word, and we shall, to our utmost power, be ready to deliver it into thy hand; or, if what we have said, shall not by thy fatherhood be thought best, and most meet to be done, send us thy mind in a few words, and we are all ready to follow thy counsel, to the hazarding of our lives, and what else we have.

Given under hands this day and date above written, after a close consultation at the house of Mr. Mischief, who is yet alive, and hath his place in our desirable town of Mansoul.

When Mr. Profane, (for he was the carrier,) was come with his letter to Hell-gate-hill, he knocked at the brazen gates for entrance. Then did Cerberus, the porter, (for he is the keeper of that gate,) open to Mr. Profane; to whom he delivered his letter, which he had brought from the Diabolonians in Mansoul. So he carried it in and presented it to Diabolus his lord; and said, Tidings, my lord from Mansoul; from our trusty friends in Mansoul.

Then came together from all places of the den, Beelzebub, Lucifer, Apollyon, with the rest of the rabblement there, to hear what news from Mansoul. So the letter was broken and read, and Cerberus stood by. When the letter was openly read, and the contents thereof spread into all corners of the den, command was given, that without let or stop, Deadmen's bell should be rung for joy. So the bell was rung, and the princes rejoiced that Mansoul was like to come to ruin. Now the clapper of the bell went, The town of Mansoul is coming to dwell with us, make room for the town of Mansoul. This bell, therefore, they rang because they hoped that they should have Mansoul again.

Now when they had performed this their horrible ceremony, they got together again to consult what answer to send to their friends in Mansoul; and some advised one thing and some another; but at length, because the business required haste, they left the whole business to the prince Diabolus, judging him the most proper lord of the place. So he drew up a letter as he thougt fit, in answer to what Mr. Profane had brought, and sent it to the Diabolonians in Mansoul, by the same hand that had brought theirs to him; and these were the contents thereof:

"To our offspring, the high and mighty Diabolonians, that yet dwell in the town of Mansoul, Diabolus, the great prince of Mansoul, wisheth a prosperous issue and conclusion of those many brave enterprises, conspiracies and designs, that you, of your love and respect to our honor, have in your hearts to attempt to do against Mansoul."

BELOVED children and disciples, my Lord Fornication, Adultery, and the rest, We have here, in our desolate den, received, to our highest joy and content, your welcome letter, by the hand of our trusty Mr. Profane; and to show how acceptable your tidings were, we rung out our bell for gladness; for we rejoiced as much as we could, when we perceived that yet we had friends in Mansoul, and such as sought our honor and revenge in the ruin of the town of Mansoul. We also rejoice to hear that they are in a degenerate condition, have onfeded their Prince, and that he is gone. Their sickness also pleaseth us, as doth also your health, might and strength. Glad also would we be, right horribly beloved, could we get this town into our clutches again. Nor will we be sparing of our wit, our cunning, our craft, and hellish inven-

tions, to bring to a wished conclusion this your brave beginning.

And take this for your comfort, (our birth and our offspring,) that if we again surprise and take it, we will attempt to put all your foes to the sword, and will make you the great lords and captains of the place. Nor need you fear (if ever we get it again,) that we, after that, shall be cast out any more; for we will come with more strength, and so take faster hold than at the first we did. Besides, it is the law of that Prince which now they own, that if we get them a second time, they shall be ours for ever.

Do you, therefore, our trusty Diabolonians, yet more pry into, and endeavor to spy out the weakness of the town of Mansoul. We also would that you yourselves do attempt to weaken them more and more. Send us word, also, by what means we had best to attempt the regaining thereof; to wit, whether by persuasion to a vain and loose life; or whether by tempting them to doubt and despair; or whether by blowing up the town by the gunpowder of pride and self-conceit. Do you also, O ye brave Diabolonians, and true sons of the pit, be always in readiness to make a most horrid assault within, when we shall be ready to storm it without. Now speed you in your project, and we in our desires, to the utmost power of our gates; which is the wish of your great Diabolus, Mansoul's enemy, and him that trembles when he thinks of judgment to come. All the blessings of the pit be upon you; and so we close up our letter.

Given at the pit's mouth, by the joint consent of all the princes of darkness, to be sent (to the force and power that we have yet remaining in Mansoul) by the hand of Mr. Profane.

By me, DIABOLUS.

This letter was sent to the Diabolonians that yet remained in Mansoul, and that yet inhabited the wall, from the dark dungeon of Diabolus by the hand of Mr. Profane, by whom they also in Mansoul sent theirs to the pit. Now, when this Mr. Profane had made his return, and was come to Mansoul again, he went and came as he was wont, to the house of Mr. Mischief, for there was the conclave, and the place where the contrivers were met. Now when they saw that their messenger was returned safe and sound, they were greatly glad thereat. Then he presented them his letter, which he had brought from Diabolus for them; the which when they had read and considered, did much augment their gladness. They asked him after the welfare of their friends; as how their Lord Diabolus, Lucifer, and Beelzebub did, with the rest of those of the den. To which this Profane made answer, Well, well, my lords, they are well, even as well as can be in their place. They also, said he, did ring for joy at the reading of your letter, as you will perceive by this when you read it.

Now, as was said, when they had read their letter, and perceived that it encouraged them in their work, they fell to their way of contriving again, how they might complete their Diabolonian design upon Mansoul. And the first thing that they agreed upon was, to keep all things from Mansoul as close as they could. Let it not be known; let not Mansoul be acquainted with what we design against it. The next thing was how, or by what means, they should try to bring to pass the ruin and overthrow of Mansoul: and one said after this manner, and another after that. Then stood up Mr. Deceit, and said, My right Diabolonian friends, our lords, and the high ones of the deep dungeon, do propound unto us these three ways:

1. Whether we had best to seek its ruin by making of Mansoul loose and vain;

2. Or, by driving them to doubt and despair;

3. Or, by endeavoring to blow them up with the gunpowder of pride and self-conceit.

Now, I think, if we shall tempt them to pride, that may do something; and if we tempt them to wantonness, that may help. But in my mind, if we could drive them into desperation, that would knock the nail on the head: for then we should have them in the first place question the truth of the love of the heart of their Prince towards them; and that will disgust him much. This, if it works well, will make them leave off quickly their way of sending petitions to him; then farewell earnest solicitations for help and supply: for then this conclusion lies naturally before them, As good do nothing as do to no purpose. So, to Mr. Deceit, they unanimously did consent.

Then the next question was, but how shall we do to bring this our project to pass? And it was answered by the same gentleman, That this might be the best way to do it: even let, quoth he, so many of our friends as are willing to venture themselves for the promoting of their prince's cause, disguise themselves with apparel, change their names, and go into the market like far-countrymen, and proffer to let themselves for servants to the famous town of Mansoul, and let them pretend to do for their masters as beneficially as may be: for by so doing they may, if Mansoul shall hire them, in little time so corrupt and defile the corporation, that her now Prince shall be not only further offended with them, but in conclusion shall spew them out of his mouth. And when this is done, our

prince Diabolus shall prey upon them with ease; yea, of themselves they shall fall into the mouth of the eater.

This project was no sooner propounded, but was as readily accepted, and forward were all Diabolonians now to engage in so delicate an enterprise; but it was not thought fit that all should do thus, wherefore they pitched upon two or three, namely, the Lord Covetousness, the Lord Lasciviousness, and the Lord Anger.—The Lord Covetousness called himself by the name of *Prudent-Thrifty;* the Lord Lasciviousness called himself by the name of *Harmless-mirth;* and the Lord Anger called himself by the name of *Good-zeal.*

So, upon a market day, they came into the market-place, three lusty fellows they were to look on, and they were clothed in sheeps-russet, which was also now in a manner as white as were the white robes of the men of Mansoul.—Now the men could speak the language of Mansoul well. So when they were come into the market-place, and had offered to let themselves to the townsmen, they were presently taken up; for they asked but little wages, and promised to do their masters great service.

Mr. Mind hired Prudent-thrifty, and Mr. Godly-fear hired Good-zeal. True, this fellow, Harmless-mirth, did hang a little in hand, and could not so soon get him a master as the others did, because the town of Mansoul was now in Lent; but after a while, because Lent was almost out, the Lord Willbewill hired Harmless-mirth, to be both his waiting-man and lackey, and thus they got them masters.

These villians now being got thus far into the houses of the men of Mansoul, quickly began to do great mischief therein; for being filthy, arch, and sly, they quickly corrupted the families where they were; yea, they tainted their masters much, especially this Prudent-thrifty, and him they call Harmless-mirth. True, he that went under the vizor of Good-zeal, was not so well liked of his master; for he quickly found that he was but a counterfeit rascal; the which when the fellow perceived, with speed he made his escape from the house, or I doubt not but his master had hanged him.

Well, when these vagabonds had thus far carried on their design, and had corrupted the town as much as they could, in the next place, they considered with themselves at what time their prince Diabolus without, and themselves within the town, should make an attempt to seize upon Mansoul; and they all agreed upon this, that a market day should be best for that work; for why? Then will the townsmen be busy in their ways; and always take this for a rule, When people are most busy in the world, they least fear a surprise. We also then, said they, shall be able, with less suspicion, to gather ourselves together, for the work of our friends and lords; yea, on such a day, if we shall attempt our work, and miss it, we may, when they shall give us the rout, the better hide ourselves in the crowd, and escape.

These things being thus far agreed upon by them, they wrote another letter to Diabolus, and sent it by the hand of Mr. Profane, the contents of which were these:

"The Lords of Looseness send to the great and high Diabolus, from our dens, caves, holes, and strong holds, in and about the wall of the town of Mansoul, greeting:"

Our great lord, and the nourisher of our lives, Diabolus; how glad we were when we heard of your fatherhood's readiness to comply with us, and help forward our design in our attempts to ruin Mansoul, none can tell, but those who, as we do, set themselves against all appearance of good, when and wheresoever we find it.

Touching the encouragement that your greatness is pleased to give us to continue to devise, contrive and study the utter desolation of Mansoul, that we are not solicitous about, for we know right well, that it cannot but be pleasing and profitable to us, to see our enemies, and them that seek our lives, die at our feet, or fly before us; We, therefore, are still contriving, and that to the best of our cunning, to make this work most facile and easy to your lordship, and to us.

First we considered of that most hellishly cunning-compacted three-fold project, that by you was propounded to us in your last; and have concluded, that though, to blow them up with the gunpowder of pride would do well, and to do it by, tempting them to be loose and vain, would help on; yet, to contrive to bring them into the gulf of desperation, we think, will do best of all. Now we, who are at your beck, have thought of two ways to do this; first, we, for our parts, will make them as vile as we can; and then you with us, at a time appointed, shall be ready to fall upon them with the utmost force. And of all the nations that are at your whistle, we think that an army of Doubters may be the most likely to attack and overcome the town of Mansoul. Thus, we shall overcome these enemies; else the pit shall open her mouth upon them, and desparation shall thrust them down into it. We have also, to effect this so much wished design, sent already three of our trusty Diabolonians among them; they are disguised in garb, they have changed their names, and are now accepted of them; to wit, Covetousness, Lasciviousness, and Anger. The name of Covetousness is chang-

ed to Prudent-thrifty; and him Mr. Mind has hired, and is almost become as bad as our friend.

Lasciviousness has changed his name to Harmless-mirth, and he is got to be the Lord Willbewill's lackey; but he has made his master very wanton. Anger changed his name into Good-zeal, and was entertained by Mr. Godly-fear; but the peevish old gentleman took pepper in his nose, and turned our companions out of his house. Nay, he has informed us since, that he ran away from him, or else his old master had hanged him up for his labor.

Now these have much helped forward our work and design upon Mansoul; for notwithstanding the spite and quarrelsome temper of the old gentleman last mentioned, the other two ply their business well, and are like to ripen the work apace.

Our next project is, that it be concluded that you come upon thy town upon a market-day, and that when they are upon the heat of their business; for then, to be sure, they will be most secure, and least think that an assault will be made upon them. They will also, at such a time be less able to defend themselves, and to offend you in the prosecution of our design. And we, your trusty, (and we are sure your beloved,) ones, shall, when you make your furious assault without, be ready to second the business within. So shall we, in all likelihood, be able to put Mansoul to utter confusion, and to swallow them up before they can come to themselves. If your serpentine heads, most subtle dragons, and our highly esteemed lords, can find out a better way than this, let us quickly know your minds.

To the Monsters of the Infernal Cave,
From the house of Mr. Mischief, in
Mansoul, By the hand of
Mr. Profane.

Now, all the while that the raging runagates, and hellish Diabolonians, were thus contriving the ruin of the town of Mansoul, they, to wit, the poor town itself, was in a sad and woful case; partly because they had so grievously offended Shaddai and his Son; and partly, because that the enemies thereby got strength within them afresh; and also because, though they had by many petitions made suit to the Prince Emmanuel, and to his Father Shaddai, by him, for their pardon and favor, yet, hitherto, obtained they not one smile; but contrarywise, through the craft and subtility of the Domestic Diabolonians, their cloud was made to grow blacker and blacker, and their Emmanuel to stand at further distance.

The sickness also still greatly raged in Mansoul, both among the captains and the inhabitants of the town, their enemies and their enemies only were now lively and strong, and like to become the head, whilst Mansoul was made the tail.

By this time the letter last mentioned, that was written by the Diabolonians that yet lurked in the town of Mansoul, was conveyed to Diabolus in the black den, by the hand of Mr. Profane. He carried the letter by Hell-gate-hill, as afore, and conveyed it by Cerberus to his lord.

But when Cerberus and Mr. Profane met, they were presently great as beggars; and thus they fell into discourse about Mansoul, and about the project against her.

Cerb. Ah! old friend, quoth Cerberus, art thou come to Hell-gate-hill again! By St. Mary I am glad to see thee.

Prof. Yes my lord, I am come again about the concerns of the town of Mansoul.

Cerb. Prithee tell me what condition, is that town of Mansoul in at present?

Prof. In a brave condition, my lord, for us, and for my lords the lords of this place, I trow; for they are greatly decayed as to godliness, and that is as well as our hearts can wish; their Lord is greatly out with them, and that doth also please us well. We have already also a foot in their dish, for our Diabolonian friends are laid in their bosoms, and what do we lack but to be masters of the place?

Besides, our trusty friends in Mansoul are daily plotting to betray it to the lords of this town; also the sickness rages bitterly among them, and that which makes up all, we hope at last to prevail.

Cerb. Then said the dog of Hell-gate, no time like this to assault them; I wish that the enterprise be followed close, and that the success desired may be soon effected. Yea, I wish it for the poor Diabolonians' sakes, that live in the continual fear of their lives, in the traitorous town of Mansoul.

Prof. The contrivance is almost finished; the lords in Mansoul that are Diabolonians, are at it day and night, and the other are like silly doves that want heart to be concerned with their state, and to consider that ruin is at hand. Besides you may, yea, must think, when you put all things together, that there are many reasons that prevail with Diabolus to make what haste he can.

Cerb. Thou hast said as it is: I am glad things are at this pass. Go in, my brave Profane, to my lords, they will give thee for thy welcome, as good a *coranto* as this kingdom will afford. I have sent thy letter in already.

Then Mr. Profane went into the den, and his lord Diabolus met him, and saluted

him with, "Welcome, my trusty servant, I have been made glad with thy letter." The rest of the lords of the pit gave him also their salutations. Then Profane, after obeisance made to them all said, "Let Mansoul be given to my lord Diabolus, and let him be her king forever." And with that the yawning gorge of hell gave so loud and hideous a groan, (for that is the music of that place,) that it made the mountains about it totter, as if they would fall in pieces.

Now, after they had read and considered the letter, they consulted what answer to return; and the first that spake to it was Lucifer.

Lucif. Then said he, the first project of the Diabolonians in Mansoul is like to be lucky, and to take; to wit, that they will, by all the means they can, make Mansoul yet more vile and filthy; no way to destroy a soul like this; our old friend Balaam went this way, and prospered many years ago; let this therefore stand with us for a maxim, and be to Diabolonians for a general rule in all ages, for nothing can make this to fail but grace, in which, I would hope, that this town has no share. But whether to fall upon them on a market-day, because of their cumber in business, that I would should be under debate. And there is more reason why this head should be debated, than why some other should; because upon this will turn the whole of what we shall attempt. If we time not our business well, our whole project may fail. Our friends the Diabolonians say, that a market-day is best, for then will Mansoul be most busy, and have fewest thoughts of a surprise. But what if they should double their guards on those days, (and methinks nature and reason would teach them to do it,) and what if they should keep such a watch on those days as the necessity of their present case doth require? Yea, what if their men should be always in arms on those days? Then you may, my lords, be disappointed in your attempts, and may bring our friends in the town to utter danger of unavoidable ruin.

Beel. Then said the great Beelzebub, there is something in what my lord hath said, but his conjecture may or may not fall out. Nor hath my lord laid it down as that which must not be receded from, for I know that he said it only to provoke to a warm debate thereabout. Therefore we must understand, if we can, whether the town of Mansoul has such sense and knowledge of her decayed state, and of the design that we have on foot against her, as doth provoke her to set watch and ward at her gates, and to double them on market-days. But if, after inquiry made, it shall be found, that they are asleep, then any day will do, but a market-day is best; and this is my judgment in this case.

Diab. Then, quoth Diabolus, how should we know this? And it was answered, Inquire about it at the mouth of Mr. Profane. So Profane was called in and asked the question, and he made his answer as follows:

Prof. My lords, so far as I can gather, this is at present the condition of the town of Mansoul: they are decayed in their faith and love; Emmanuel their Prince has given them the back; they send often by petition to fetch him again, but he maketh not haste to answer their request, nor is there much reformation among them.

Diab. I am glad that they are backward to a reformation, but yet I am afraid of their petitioning. However, their looseness of life is a sign that there is not much heart in what they do, and without the heart things are little worth. But go on my masters, I will divert you, my lords no longer.

Beel. If the case be so with Mansoul, as Mr. Profane has described it to be, it will be no great matter what day we assault it; nor their prayers, nor their power will do them much service.

Apol. When Beelzebub had ended his oration, then Apollyon did begin. My opinion, said he, concerning this matter, is, that we go on fair and softly, not doing things in a hurry. Let our friends in Mansoul go on still to pollute and defile it, by seeking to draw it yet more into sin, for there is nothing like sin to devour Mansoul. If this be done, and it takes effect, Mansoul of itself will leave off to watch, to petition, or any thing else that should tend to her security and safety; for she will forget her Emmanuel, she will not desire his company; and can she be gotten thus to live, her Prince will not come to her in haste. Our trusty friend, Mr. Carnal-security, with one of his tricks, did drive him out of the town, and why may not my Lord Covetousness, and my Lord Lasciviousness, by what they may do, keep him out of the town? And this I will tell you, (not because you know it not,) that two or three Diabolonians, if entertained and countenanced by the town of Mansoul, will do more to the keeping of Emmanuel from them, and towards making of the town of Mansoul your own, than can an army or a legion that should be sent out from us to withstand him.

Let therefore, this first project that our friends in Mansoul have set on foot, be strongly and diligently carried on with all cunning and craft imaginable; and let them send continually under one guise or another, more and other of their men to play with the people of Mansoul; and then perhaps, we shall not need to be at the charge of making a war upon them;

or if that must of necessity be done, yet the more sinful they are, the less able, to be sure, they will be to resist us, and then the more easily we shall overcome them. And besides, suppose, (and that is the worst that can be supposed,) that Emmanuel should come to them again, why may not the same means, or the like, drive him from them once more? Yea, why may he not by their lapse into that sin again, be driven from them for ever, for the sake of which he was at first driven from them for a season? And if this should happen, then away go with him his rams and his slings, his captains, his soldiers, and he leaveth Mansoul naked and bare. Yea, will not this town, when she sees herself utterly forsaken of her Prince, of her own accord open her gates again unto you? But this must be done by time, a few days will not effect so great a work as this.

So soon as Apollyon had made an end of speaking, Diabolus began to blow out his own malice, and to plead his own cause; and he said, "My lords, and powers of the cave, my true and trusty friends, I have with much impatience, as becomes me, given ear to your long and tedious orations. But my furious gorge, and empty paunch, so lusteth after a repossession of my famous town of Mansoul, that whatever comes on't I can wait no longer to see the events of lingering projects. I must, and that without further delay, seek by all means I can to fill my insatiable gulf with the soul and body of the town of Mansoul. Therefore lend me your heads, your hearts, and your help, now I am going to recover my town of Mansoul.

When the lords and princes of the pit saw the flaming desire that was in Diabolus to devour the miserable town of Mansoul, they left off to raise any more objections, but consented to lend him what strength they could; though had Apollyon's advice been taken, they had far more fearfully distressed the town of Mansoul. But, I say, they were willing to lend him what strength they could, not knowing what need they might have of him, when they should engage for themselves as he. Wherefore they fell to advising about the next thing propounded, to wit, what soldiers there were, and also how many, with whom Diabolus should go against the town of Mansoul to take it; and after some debate it was concluded, according as in the letter the Diabolonians had suggested, that none was more fit for that expedition than an army of terrible Doubters. They therefore concluded to send against Mansoul an army of sturdy Doubters.—The number thought fit to be employed in that service, was between twenty and thirty thousand. So then the result of that great council of those high and mighty lords was that Diabolus should, even now, out of hand, beat up his drum for men in the land of Doubting, (which land lieth upon the confines of the place called Hell-gate-hill,) for men that might be employed by him against the miserable town of Mansoul. It was also concluded that these lords themselves should help him in the war, and that they would, to that end, head and manage his men. So they drew up a letter, and sent back to the Diabolonians that lurked in Mansoul, and that waited for the back coming of Mr. Profane, to signify to them into what method and forwardness they at present had put their design. The contents wherefore follow:

From the dark and horrible dungeons of Hell, Diabolus, with all the society of the princes of darkness, sends to our trusty ones, in and about the walls of the town of Mansoul, now impatiently waiting for our most devilish answer, to their venomous and most poisonous design against the town of Mansoul.

Our native ones, in whom from day to day we boast, and in whose actions all the year long we do greatly delight ourselves, we received your welcome, because highly esteemed letter, at the hand of our trusty and greatly beloved, the old gentleman Mr. Profane. And do give you to understand that when we had broken it up, and had read the contents thereof, (to your amazing memory be it spoken,) our yawning, hollow-bellied place, where we are, made so hideous and yelling a noise for joy, that the mountains that stand round about Hell-gate-hill, had like to have been shaken to pieces at the sound thereof.

We could also do no less than admire your faithfulness to us, with the greatness of that subtelty that now hath shewed itself to be in your heads to serve against the town of Mansoul. For you have invented for us so excellent a method for our proceeding against that rebellious people, a more effectual cannot be thought of by all the wits of hell. The proposals therefore which now at last you have sent us, since we saw them, we have done little else but higly approved and admired them.

Nay, we shall, to encourage you in the profundity of your craft, let you know, that at a full assembly and conclave of our princes and principalities of this place, your project was discoursed and tossed from one side of our cave to the other by their mightinesses; but a better, and as was by themselves judged, a more fit and proper way, by all their wits could hot be invented, to surprise, take, and make our own, the rebellious town of Mansoul.

Wherefore, in fine, all that was said that varied from what you had in your letter propounded, fell of itself to the ground, and yours only was stuck to by Diabolus the prince; yea, his gaping gorge and yawning paunch were on fire to put your invention into execution.

We therefore give you to understand, that our stout, furious, and unmerciful Diabolus is raising for your relief, and the ruin of the rebellious town of Mansoul, more than twenty thousand Doubters to come against that people.—they are all stout and sturdy men, and men that of old have been accustomed to war. I say he is doing of this work of his with all the speed he can; for his heart and spirit are engaged in it. We desire, therefore, that as you have hitherto stuck to us, and given us both advice and encouragement, that you still will prosecute our design; nor shall you lose, but be gainers thereby; yea, we intend to make you the lords of Mansoul.

One thing may not by any means be omitted, that is, those with us desire that every one of you that are in mansoul, would still use all your power, cunning, and skill, with delusive persuasions, yet to draw the town of Mansoul into more sin and wickedness, even that sin may be finished and bring forth death.

For thus it is concluded with us, that the more vile, sinful, and debauched, the town of Mansoul is, the more backward will be their Emmanuel to come to their help, either by presence, or other relief; yea, the more sinful, the more weak, and so the more unable will they be to make resistance when we shall make our assault upon them to swallow them up: yea, they may cause that their mighty Shaddai himself may cast them out of his protection; yea, and send for his captains and soldiers home with his slings and rams, and leave them naked and bare, and then the town of Mansoul will of itself open to us, and fall as the fig into the mouth of the eater: yea, to be sure that we then with a great deal of ease shall come upon her and overcome her.

As to the time of our coming upon Mansoul, we as yet have not fully resolved upon that, though at present some of us think as you, that a market-day, or a market-day at night, will certainly be the best. However, do you be ready, and when you shall hear our roaring drum without, do you be as busy to make the most horrible confusion within. So shall Mansoul certainly be distressed before and behind, and shall not know which way to betake herself for help. My Lord Lucifer, my Lord Beelzebub, my Lord Apollyon, my Lord Legion, with the rest, salute you, as does also my Lord Diabolus; and we wish both you, with all that you do or shall possess, the very self-same fruit and success for their doing, as we at present enjoy for ours.

From our dreadful confines in the most fearful pit, we salute you, and so do those many legions here with us, wishing you may be as hellishly prosperous as we desire to be ourselves. By the letter carrier, Mr. Profane.

Then Mr. Profane addressed himself for his return to Mansoul, with his errand from the horrible pit to the Diabolonians that dwelt in that town. So he came up the stairs from the deep to the mouth of the cave where Cerberus was. Now when Cerberus saw him, he asked how matters went below, about and against the town of Mansoul.

Prof. Things go as well as we can expect. The letter that I carried thither was highly approved, and well liked by all my lords, and I am returning to tell our Diabolonians so. I have an answer to it here in my bosom, that I am sure will make our masters that sent me glad; for the contents thereof are to encourage them to pursue their design to the utmost, and to be ready also to fall on within, when they shall see my Lord Diabolus beleaguering the town of Mansoul.

Cerb. But does he intend to go against them himself?

Prof. Does he! Ay, and he will take along with him more than twenty thousand, all sturdy Doubters, and men of war, picked men, from the land of Doubting, to serve him in the expedition.

Cerb. Then was Cerberus glad, and said, And are there such brave preparations a making to go against the miserable town of Mansoul! and would I might be put at the head of a thousand of them, that I might also show my valor against the famous town of Mansoul.

Prof. Your wish may come to pass; you look like one that has mettle enough, and my lord will have with him those that are valiant and stout. But my business requires haste.

Cerb. Ay, so it does. Speed thee to the town of Mansoul, with all the deepest mischiefs that this place can afford thee. And when thou shalt come to the house of Mr. Mischief, the place where the Diabolonians meet to plot, tell them that Cerberus doth wish them his service, and that if he may, he will with the army come up against the famous town of Mansoul.

Prof. That I will. And I know that my lords that are there will be glad to hear it, and to see you also.

So after a few more of such kind of compliments, Mr. Profane took leave of his friend Cerberus, and Cerberus again with a thousand of their pit-wishes, bid him haste with all speed to his masters. The which

when he had heard, he made obeisance and began to gather up his heels to run.

Thus therefore he returned, and came to Mansoul, and going as afore to the house of Mr. Mischief, there he found the Diabolonians assembled, and waiting for his return. Now when he was come, and had presented himself, he delivered to them his letter, and adjoined this compliment to them therewith: "My lords, from the confines of the pit, the high and mighty principalities and powers of the den, salute you here, the true Diabolonians of the town of Mansoul: Wishing you always the most proper of their benedictions, for the great service, high attempts, and brave achievments, that you have put yourselves upon, for the restoring to our prince Diabolus the famous town of Mansoul."

This was therefore the present state of the miserable town of Mansoul; she had offended her Prince, and he was gone; she had encouraged the powers of hell, by her foolishness; to come against her to seek her utter destruction.

True, the town of Mansoul was somewhat made sensible of her sin, but the Diabolonians were gotten into her bowels; she cried, but Emmanuel was gone, and her cries did not fetch him as yet again. Besides, she knew not whether ever or never he would return and come to his Mansoul again; nor did they know the power and industry of the enemy, nor how forward they were to put in execution that plot of hell that they had devised against her.

They did indeed still send petition after petition to the Prince, but he answered all with silence. They did neglect reformation, and that was as Diabolus would have it; for he knew, if they regarded iniquity in their heart, their King would not hear their prayer; they therefore still grew weaker and weaker, and were as a rolling thing before the whirlwind. They cried to their King for help, and laid Diabolonians in their bosoms. What therefore should a King do to them? Yea, there seemed now to be a mixture in Mansoul, the Diabolonians and the Mansoulians would walk the streets together. Yea, they began to seek their peace, for they thought that since the sickness had been so mortal in Mansoul, it was in vain to go handy-gripes with them. Besides the weakness of Mansoul was the strength of their enemies; and the sins of Mansoul the advantage of the Diabolonians. The foes of Mansoul also now began to promise themselves the town for a possession; there was no great difference now betwixt Mansoulians and Diabolonians, both seemed to be masters of Mansoul. Yea, the Diabolonians increased and grew, but the town of Mansoul diminished greatly. There was more than eleven thousand of men, women, and children, that died by the sickness in Mansoul.

But now, as Shaddai would have it, there was one whose name was Mr. Pry-well, a great lover of the people of Mansoul; and he as his manner was, did go listening up and down in Mansoul, to see, and to hear, if at any time he might, whether there was any design against it or no. For he was always a jealous man, and feared some mischief sometimes would befal it, either from the Diabolonians within, or from some power without. Now upon a time it so happened, as Mr. Pry-well went listening here and there, that he lighted upon a place called Vile-hill, in Mansoul, where Diabolonians used to meet; so hearing a muttering, (you must know that was in the night,) he softly drew near to hear; nor had he stood long under the house end, (for there stood a house there,) but he heard one confidently affirm, that it was not, or would not be long before Diabolus should possess himself again of Mansoul; and that then the Diabolonians did intend to put all Mansoulians to the sword, and would kill and destroy the King's captains, and drive all his soldiers out of the town.

He said, moreover, that he knew there were about twenty thousand fighting men prepared by Diabolus for the accomplishing of this design; and that it would not be months before they all should see it. When Mr. Pry-well had heard this story, he did quickly believe it was true; wherefore he went forthwith to my Lord Mayor's house, and acquainted him therewith; who, sending for the Subordinate Preacher, brake the business to him, and he as soon gave the alarm to the town, for he was now the chief preacher in Mansoul, because as yet my Lord Secretary was ill at ease. And this was the way that the Subordinate Preacher did take to alarm the town therewith; the same hour he caused the lecture-bell to be rung; so the people came together; he gave them a short exhortation to watchfulness, and made Mr Pry-well's news the argument thereof. For said he, an horrible plot is contrived against Mansoul, even to massacre us all in a day; nor is this story to be slighted, for Mr. Pry-well is the author thereof. Mr. Pry-well was always a lover of Mansoul, a sober and judicious man, a man that is no tattler, no raiser of false reports, but no one that loves to look into the bottom of matters, and talks nothing of news but by very solid arguments.

I will call him, and you shall hear him your own selves. So he called him, and he came and told his tale so punctually, and affirmed its truth with such ample grounds, that Mansoul fell presently under a conviction of the truth of what he said. The preacher also backed him, saying, "Sirs,

it is not irrational for us to believe it, for we have provoked Shaddai to anger, and have sinned Emmanuel out of the town. We have had too much correspondence with Diabolonians, and have forsaken our former mercies; no marvel then if the enemy both within and without should design and plot our ruin; and what time like this to do it? the sickness is now in the town, and we have been made weak thereby. Many a good-meaning man is dead, and the Diabolonians of late grow stronger and stronger.

"Besides, quoth the Subordinate Preacher, I have received from this good truth-teller this one inkling further, that he understood by those that he overheard, that several letters have lately passed between the furies and the Diabolonians, in order to our destruction." When Mansoul heard all this, and not being able to gainsay it, they lift up their voices and wept. Mr. Pry-well also, in the presence of the townsmen, confirmed all that their Subordinate Preacher had said. Wherefore they now set afresh to bewail their folly, and to a doubling of petitions to Shaddai and his Son. They also break the business to the captains, high commanders, and men of war, in the town of Mansoul, entreating them to use the means to be strong, and to take good courage, and that they would look after their harness, and make themselves ready to give Diabolus battle, by night and by day, should he come, as they were informed he will, to beleaguer the town of Mansoul.

When the captains heard this, they being always true lovers of the town of Mansoul, what do they, but like so many Samsons they shake themselves, and come together to consult and contrive how to defeat those bold and hellish contrivances that were upon the wheel, by the means of Diabolus and his friends, against the now sickly, weakly, and much impoverished town of Mansoul; and they agreed upon the following particulars:

1. That the gates of Mansoul should be kept shut and made fast with bars and locks; and that all persons that went out or came in should be very strictly examined by the captains of the guards, to the end, said they, that those that are managers of the plot amongst us, may, either coming or going, be taken; and that we may also find out who are the great contrivers, amongst us, of our ruin.

2. The next thing was, that a strict search should be made for all kinds of Diabolonians throughout the whole town of Mansoul; and that every man's house from top to bottom should be looked into, and that too, house by house, that if possible, a further discovery might be made of all such among them as had a hand in these designs.

3. It was further concluded upon, that wheresoever, or with whomsoever, any of the Diabolonians were found, that even those of the town of Mansoul that had given them house and harbor, should to their shame, and the warning of others, take penance in the open place.

4. It was moreover resolved by the famous town of Mansoul, that a public fast, and a day of humiliation should be kept throughout the whole corporation, to the justifying of their Prince, the abasing of themselves before him for their transgressions against him, and against Shaddai his Father. It was further resolved, that all such in Mansoul as did not that day endeavor to keep that fast, and to humble themselves for their faults, but should mind their worldly employs, or be found wandering up and down the streets, should be taken for Diabolonians, and should suffer as Diabolonians, for such their wicked doings,

5. It was further concluded then, that with what speed, and with what warmth of mind, they could they would renew their humiliation for sin, and their petitions to Shaddai for help; they also resolved to send tidings to the court of all that Mr. Pry-well had told them.

6. It was also determined, that thanks should be given by the town of Mansoul to Mr. Pry-well for his diligent seeking of the welfare of their town; and further, forasmuch as he was naturally inclined to seek their good, and also to undermine their foes they gave him a commission of Scoutmaster general, for the good of the town of Mansoul.

When the corporation, with their captains, had thus concluded, they did as they had said: they shut up their gates; they made for Diabolonians strict search; they made those with whom any were found, to do penance in the open place; they kept their fast, and renewed their petition to their Prince: and Mr. Pry-well managed his charge, and the trust that Mansoul had put in his hands, with great conscience, and good fidelity: for he gave himself wholly up to his employ, and that not only within the town, but he went out to pry, to see, and to hear.

And not many days after he provided for his journey, and went towards Hell-gate-hill, into the country where the Doubters were, where he heard of all that had been talked of in Mansoul, and he perceived also that Diabolus was almost ready for his march, &c.; so he came back with speed, and calling the captains and elders of Mansoul together, he told them where he had been, what he had heard, and what he had seen.

Particularly he told them, that Diabolus was almost ready for his march; and that he had made old Mr. Incredulity, that once break prison in Mansoul, the general of his army; that the army consisted all of Doubters; and that their number was above twenty thousand. He told, moreover, that Diabolus did intend to bring with him the chief princes of the infernal pit, and that he would make them chief captains over his Doubters. He told them morover, that it was certainly true, that several of the black-den would, with Diabolus, ride reformades to reduce the town of Mansoul to the obedience of Diabolus their prince.

He said moreover, that he understood by the Doubters, among whom he had been, that the reason why old Incredulity was made general of the whole army, was, because none truer than he to the tyrant; and because he had an implacable spite against the welfare of the town of Mansoul. Besides, said he, he remembers the affronts that Mansoul has given, and he is resolved to be revenged of them.

But the black princes shall be made high commanders, only Incredulity shall be over them all, because (which I had almost forgot) he can more easily, and more dexterously, beleaguer the town of Mansoul, than can any of the princes besides.

Now, when the captains of Mansoul, with the elders of the town, had heard the tidings that Mr. Pry-well brought, they thought it expedient, without further delay, to put into execution the laws against the Diabolonians, which their prince had made, and given them in commandment to manage aginst them. Wherefore, forthwith a diligent and impartial search was made in all houses in Mansoul, for all and all manner of Diabolonians. Now, in the house of Mr. Mind, and in the house of the great Lord Willbewill, were two Diabolonians found. In Mr. Mind's house was one Lord Covetousness found; but he had changed his name to Prudent-thrifty. In my Lord Willbewill's house one Lasciviousness was found; but he had changed his name to Harmless-mirth. These two the captains and elders of the town of Mansoul took, and committed them to custody under the hand of Mr. True-man the gaoler; and this man handled them so severely, and loaded them so well with irons, that in time they fell into a very deep consumption, and died in the prison-house; their masters also, according to the agreement of the captains and elders, were brought to do penance in the open place, to their shame, and a warning to the rest of the town of Mansoul.

Now this was the manner of penance in those days. The persons offending being made sensible of the evil of their doings, were enjoined open confession of their faults, and a strict amendment of their lives.

After this, the captains and elders of Mansoul sought yet to find out more Diabolonians, wherever they lurked, whether in dens, caves, holes, vaults, or where else they could, in or about the wall or the town of Mansoul. But though they could plainly see their footing, and so follow them by their track and smell to their holds, even to the mouths of their caves and dens; yet take, and do justice upon them, they could not; their ways were so crooked, their holds so strong, and they so quick to take sanctuary there.

But Mansoul ruled now, with so stiff an hand, over the Diabolonians that were left, that they were glad to shrink into corners. Time was when they durst walk openly, and in the day; but now they were forced to embrace privacy, and in the night. Time was when a Mansoulian was their companion; but now they counted them deadly enemies. This good change did Mr. Prywell's intelligence make in the famous town of Mansoul.

By this time Diabolus had finished his army, which he intended to bring with him for the ruin of Mansoul; and had set over them captains, and other field-officers, such as liked his furious stomach best; himself was lord Paramount, Incredulity was general of his army. Their highest captains shall be named afterwards; but now for their officers, colours, and escutcheons.

1. Their first captain was Captain Rage, he was captain over the Election-doubters; his were red colors, his standard-bearer was Mr. Destructive, and the great red dragon he had for his escutcheon.

2. The second captain was Captain Fury, he was captain over the Vocation-doubters; his standard-bearer was Mr. Darkness, his colors were those that were pale, and he had for his escutcheon the fiery flying serpent.

3. The third captain was Captain Damnation, he was captain over the Grace-Doubters; his were the red colors, Mr. No-life bare them, and he had for his escutcheon the black-den.

4. The fourth captain was Captain Insatiable, he was captain over the Faith-doubters; his were the red colors, Mr. Devourer bare them, and he had for an escutcheon the yawning jaws.

5. The fifth captain was Captain Brimstone, he was captain over the Perseverance-doubters; his also were the red colors Mr. Burning bare them, and his escutcheon was the blue and stinking flame.

6. The sixth captain was Captain Torment, he was captain over the Resurrection-doubters; his colors were those that

were pale, Mr. Gnaw was his standard-bearer, and he had the black worm for his escutcheon.

7. The seventh captain was Captain No-ease, he was captain over the Salvation-doubters; his were the red colors, Mr. Restless bare them, and his escutcheon was the ghastly picture of death.

8. The eighth captain was the Captain Sepulchre, he was captain over the Glory-doubters; his also were the pale colors, Mr. Corruption was his standard-bearer, and he had for his escutcheon a skull and dead men's bones.

9. The ninth captain was Captain Past-hope, he was captain of those that are called the Felicity-doubters; his standard-bearer was Mr. Despair; his also were the red colors, and his escutcheon was the hot-iron and the hard heart.

These were his captains, and these were their forces, these were their ancients, these were their colors, and these were their escutcheons. Now over these did the great Diabolus make superior captains, and they were in number seven; as namely, the Lord Beelzebub, the Lord Lucifer, the Lord Legion, the Lord Apollyon, the Lord Python, the Lord Cerberus, and the Lord Belial; these seven he set over the captains, and Incredulity was lord general, and Diabolus was king.

The reformades also, such as were like themselves, were made some of them captains of hundreds, and some of them captains of more; and thus was the army of Incredulity completed.

So they set out at Hell-gate-hill, (for there they had their rendezvous,) from whence they came with a strait course upon their march towards the town of Mansoul. Now, as was hinted before, the town had, as Shaddai would have it, received from the mouth of Mr. Pry-well, the alarm of their coming before. Wherefore they set a strong watch at the gates, and had also doubled their guards; they also mounted their slings in good places, where they might conveniently cast out their great stones to the annoyance of the furious enemy.

Nor could those Diabolonians that were in the town do that hurt as was designed they should; for Mansoul was now awake. But alas! poor people, they were sorely affrighted at the first appearance of their foes, and at their sitting down before the town, especially when they heard the roaring of their drum. This, to speak truth, was amazingly hideous to hear, it frighted all men seven miles round, if they were but awake and heard it. The streaming of their colors was also terrible and dejecting to behold.

When Diabolus was come up against the town, first he made his approach to Ear-gate, and gave it a furious assault; supposing, as it seems, that his friends in Mansoul had been ready to do the work within; but care was taken of that before, by the vigilance of the captains. Wherefore, missing of the help that he expected from them, and finding of his army warmly attended with the stones that the slingers did sling; (for that I will say for the captains, that considering the weakness that yet was upon them, by reason of the long sickness that had annoyed the town of Mansoul, they did gallantly behave themselves,) he was forced to make some retreat from Mansoul, and to intrench himself and his men in the field, without the reach of the slings of the town.

Now, having intrenched himself, he did cast up four mounts before the town; the first he called Mount Diabolus; putting his own name thereon, the more to affright the town of Mansoul; the other three he called thus, Mount Alecto, Mount Megara, and Mount Tisiphone; for these are the names of the dreadful furies of hell. Thus he began to play his game with Mansoul, and to serve it as doth the lion his prey, even to make it fall before his terror. But, as I said, the captains and soldiers resisted so stoutly, and did so much execuiton with their stones, that they made him, though against stomach, to retreat; wherefore Mansoul began to take courage.

Now upon Mount Diabolus, which was raised on the north side of the town, there did the tyrant set up his standard, and a fearful thing it was to behold; for he had wrought in it by devilish art, after the manner of an escutcheon, a flaming flame, fearful to behold, and the picture of Mansoul burning in it.

When Diabolus had thus done, he commanded that his drummer should every night approach the walls of the town of Mansoul, and so to beat a parley; the command was to do it nights, for in day-time they annoyed him with their slings; for the tyrant said, that he had a mind to parley with the now trembling town of Mansoul; and he commanded that the drum should beat every night, that through weariness they might at last (if possibly at the first they were unwilling, yet) be forced to do it.

So this drummer did as commanded, he arose and did beat his drum. But when his drum did go, if one looked towards the town of Mansoul, behold darkness and sorrow, and the light was darkened in the heaven thereof. No noise was ever heard upon earth more terrible, except the voice of Shaddai when he speaketh. But how did Mansoul tremble! It now looked for nothing but forthwith to be swallowed up.

When this drummer had beaten for a

parley; he made this speech to Mansoul: My master has bid me tell you, that if you will willingly submit, you shall have the good of the earth; but if you shall be stubborn, he is resolved to take you by force. But by that the fugitive had done beating of his drum, the people of Mansoul had betaken themselves to the captains that were in the castle: so that there was none to regard, nor to give this drummer an answer; so he proceeded no further that night, but returned again to his master to the camp.

When Diabolus saw, that by drumming he could not work out Mansoul to his will, the next night he sendeth his drummer without his drum, still to let the townsmen know that he had a mind to parley with them. But when all came to all, his parley was turned into a summons to the town to deliver up themselves; but they gave him neither heed nor hearing, for they remembered what at first it cost them to hear him a few words.

The next night he sends again, and then who should be his messenger to Mansoul, but the terrible Captain Sepulchre; so Captain Sepulchre came up to the walls of Mansoul, and made this oration to the town:

"O ye inhabitants of the rebellious town of Mansoul! I summon you, in the name of the prince Diabolus, that without any more ado you set open the gates of your town, and admit the great lord to come in. But if you shall still rebel, when we have taken to us the town by force, we will swallow you up as the grave. Wherefore, if you will hearken to my summons, say so, and if not, then let me know.

"The reason of this my summons, (quoth he,) is, for that my lord is your undoubted prince and lord, as you yourselves have formerly owned. Nor shall that assault that was given to my lord, when Emmanuel dealt so dishonorably by him, prevail with him to lose his right, and to forbear to attempt to recover his own. Consider then, O Mansoul! with thyself; wilt thou show thyself peaceable, or no? If thou shalt quietly yield up thyself, then our old friendship shall be renewed; but if thou shalt yet refuse and rebel, then expect nothing but fire and sword."

When the languishing town of Mansoul had heard this summoner, and his summons, they were yet more put to their dumps, but made the captain no answer at all; so away he went as he came.

But after some consultation among themselves, as also with some of their captains, they applied themselves afresh to the Lord Secretary for counsel and advice from him, for this Lord Secretary was their chief preacher, (as also is mentioned some pages before,) only now he was ill at ease; and of him they begged favour in these two or three things.

1. That he would look comfortably upon them, and not keep himself so much retired from them as formerly. Also that he would be prevailed with to give them a hearing, while they should make known their miserable condition to him. But to this he told them as before, that as yet he was but ill at ease, and therefore could not do as he had formerly done.

2. The second thing that they desired, was, that he would be pleased to give them his advice about their now so important affairs; for that Diabolus was come and set down before the town with no less than twenty thousand Doubters. They said, moreover, that both he and his captains were cruel men, and that they were affraid of them. But to this he said, You must look to the law of your Prince, and there see what is laid upon you to do.

3. Then they desired that his Highness would help them to frame a petition to Shaddai, and unto Emmanuel his Son; and that he would set his own hand thereto, as a token that he was one with them in it: For said they, my Lord, many a one have we sent, but can get no answer of peace: but now surely one with thy hand unto it may obtain good for Mansoul.

But all the answer that he gave to this was, That they had offended their Emmanuel, and had also grieved himself; and that therefore they must as yet partake of their own devices.

This answer of the Lord Secretary fell like a mill-stone upon them; yea, it crushed them so, that they could not tell what to do; yet they durst not comply with the demands of Diabolus, nor with the demands of his captains. So then here were the straits that the town of Mansoul was betwixt when the enemy came upon her; Her foes were ready to swallow her up, and her friends did forbear to help her.

Then stood up my Lord-Mayor, whose name was my Lord Understanding, and he began to pick and pick, until he had picked comfort out of that seemingly bitter saying of the Lord Secretary; for thus he descanted upon it: First, said he, this unavoidably follows upon the saying of my Lord, That we must yet suffer for our sins. Second, But, quoth he, the words yet sound as if at last we should be saved from our enemies; and that after a few more sorrows Emmanuel will come and be our help. Now the Lord-Mayor was the more critical in his dealing with the Secretary's words, because my Lord was more than a prophet, and because none of his words were such, but that at all times they were most exactly significant, and the townsmen were allowed

to pry into them, and to expound them to their best advantage.

So they took their leaves of my Lord, and returned, and went, and came to the captains, to whom they did tell what my Lord High Secretary had said, who, when they had heard it, were all of the same opinion as my Lord-Mayor himself; the captains therefore began to take some courage unto them, and to prepare to make some brave attempt upon the camp of the enemy, and to destroy all that were Diabolonians, with the roving Doubters that the tyrant had brought with him to destroy the poor town of Mansoul.

So all betook themselves forthwith to their places, the captains to theirs, the Lord-Mayor to his, the Subordinate Preacher to his, and my Lord Willbewill to his. The captains longed to be at some work for their Prince, for they delighted in warlike achievements. The next day therefore they came together and consulted, and after consultation had, they resolved to give an answer to the captain of Diabolus with slings, and so they did at the rising of the sun on the morrow; for Diabolus had adventured to come nearer again, but the sling-stones were to him and his, like hornets. For as there is nothing to the town of Mansoul so terrible as the roaring of Diabolus' drum, so there is nothing to Diabolus so terrible as the well playing of Emmanuel's slings. Wherefore Diabolus was forced to make another retreat, yet further off from the famous town of Mansoul.—Then did the Lord-Mayor of Mansoul cause the bells to be rung, and that thanks should be sent to the Lord High Secretary by the mouth of the Subordinate Preacher; for that by his words the captain and elders of Mansoul had been strengthened against Diabolus.

When Diabolus saw that his captains and soldiers, high lords, and renowned; were frightened, and beaten down by the stones that came from the golden slings of the Prince of the town of Mansoul, he bethought himself, and said, I will try to catch them by fawning, I will try to flatter them into my net.

Wherefore, after a while, he came down again to the wall, not now with his drum, nor with Captain Sepulchre, but having all so besugared his lips, he seemed to be a very sweet-mouthed, peaceable prince, designing nothing for honor's sake, nor to be revenged on Mansoul for injuries by them done to him; but the welfare and good, and advantage of the town and people therein, was now, as he said, his only design. Wherefore after he had called for audience, and desired that the townsfolk wold give it to him, he proceeded in his oration, and said:

Oh! the desire of my heart, the famous town of Mansoul! How many nights have I watched, and how many weary steps have I taken, if perhaps, I might do thee good! far be it, far be it from me, to desire to make a war upon you, if ye will but willingly and quietly deliver up yourselves unto me. You know that you were mine of old. Remember also, that so long as you enjoyed me for your lord, and that I enjoyed you for my subjects, you wanted for nothing of all the delights of the earth, that I, your lord and prince, could get for you; or that I could invent to make you bonny and blithe withal. Consider, you never had so many hard, dark, troublesome, and heart-afflicting hours, while you were mine, as you have had since you revolted from me; nor shall you ever have peace again, untill you and I become one as before. Be but prevailed with to embrace me again, and I will grant, yea, enlarge your old charter with abundance of privileges; so that your license and liberty shall be, to take, hold, enjoy, and make your own, all that is pleasant from the east to the west. Nor shall any of those incivilities wherewith you have offended me, be ever charged upon you by me, so long as the sun and moon endureth. Nor shall any of those dear friends of mine, that now, for the fear of you, lie lurking in dens, and holes, and caves, in Mansoul, be hurtful to you any more; yea, they shall be your servants, and shall minister unto you of their substance, and of whatever shall come to hand. I need speak no more—you know them, and have sometime since been much delighted in their company; why then should we abide at such odds? Let us renew our old acquaintance and friendship again.

"Bear with your friend; I take the liberty at this time to speak thus freely unto you. The love that I have to you presses me to do it, as also does the zeal of my heart for my friends with you; put me not therefore to further trouble, nor yourselves to further fear and frights. Have you I will, in a way of peace or war; nor do you flatter yourselves with the power and force of your captains, or that your Emmanuel will shortly come in to your help, for such strength will do you no pleasure.

"I am come against you with a stout and valiant army, and all the chief princes of the den are even at the head of it. Besides, my captains are swifter than eagles, stronger than lions, and more greedy of prey than are the evening wolves. What is Og of Bashan! What is Goliah of Gath! And what is an hundred more of them to one of the least of my captains! How then shall Mansoul, think to escape my hand and force?"

Diabolus having thus ended his flatter-

ing, fawning, deceitful, and lying speech, to the famous town of Mansoul, the Lord-Mayor replied unto him as follows:

"O Diabolus, prince of darkness, and master of all deceit, thy lying flatteries we have had, and made sufficient probation of, and have tasted too deeply of that destructive cup already; should we therefore again hearken unto thee, and so break the commandment of our great Shaddai, to join affinity with thee, would not our Prince reject us, and cast us off for ever; and being cast off by him, can the place that he has prepared for thee be a place of rest for us? Beside, O thou that art empty and void of all truth! we are rather ready to die by thy hand, than to fall in with thy flattering and lying deceits."

When the tyrant saw that there was little to be got by parleying with my Lord-Mayor, he fell into an hellish rage, and resolved that again with his army of Doubters he would another time assault the town of Mansoul.

So he called for his drummer, who beat up for his men, (and while he did beat, Mansoul did shake,) to be in readiness to give battle to the corporation; then Diabolus drew near with his army, and thus disposed of his men. Captain Cruel and Captain Torment, these he drew up and placed against Feel-gate, and commanded them to sit down there for the war. And he also appointed, that if need were, Captain No-ease should come in to their relief.

At Nose-gate he placed the Captain Brimstone and Captain Sepulchre, and bid them look well to their ward, on that side of the town of Mansoul. But at Eye-gate he placed that grimfaced one the Captain Past-hope, and there also now did he set up his terrible standard.

Now the Captain Insatiable was to look to the carriages of Diabolus, and was also appointed to take into custody, that or those persons and things that should at any time as prey be taken from the enemy.

Now Mouth-gate the inhabitants of Mansoul kept for a sally-port, wherefore that they kept strong, for that was it, by and out at which the townsfolk did send their petitions to Emmanuel their Prince; that also was the gate from the top of which the captains did play their slings at the enemies; for that gate stood somewhat ascending, so that the placing of them there and the letting of them fly from that place did much execution against the tyrant's army; wherefore, these causes, with others, Diabolus sought, if possible, to stop up Mouth-gate with dirt.

Now as Diabolus was busy and industrious in preparing to make his assault upon the town of Mansoul without, so the captains and soldiers in the corporation were as busy in preparing within; they mounted their slings, they set up their banners, they sounded their trumpets, and put themselves in such order as was judged most for the annoyance of the enemy, and for the advantage of Mansoul, and gave their soldiers orders to be ready at the sound of the trumpet for war. The Lord Willbewill also, he took the charge of watching against the rebels within, and to do what he could to take them while without, or to stifle them within their caves, dens, and holds in the town-wall of Mansoul. And to speak the truth of him, ever since he took penance for his fault, he has showed as much honesty and bravery of spirit, as any he in Mansoul; for he took one Jolly, and his brother Griggish, the two sons of his servant Harmless-mirth, (for to that day, though the father was committed to ward, the sons had a dwelling in the house of my lord;) I say, he took them, and with his own hands put them to the cross. And this was the reason why he hanged them up: After their father was put into the hands of Mr. True-man the gaoler, his sons began to play his pranks, and to be ticking and toying with the daughters of their lord; nay, it was jealousied that they were too familiar with them, the which was brought to his lordship's ear. Now his lordship being unwilling unadvisedly to put any man to death, did not suddenly fall upon them, but set watch and spies to see if the thing was true; of the which he was soon informed; for his two servants, whose names were Find-all and Tell-all, catched them together in uncivil manner more than once or twice, and went and told their lord. So when my Lord Willbewill had sufficient ground to believe the thing was true, he takes the two young Diabolonians, for such they were, (for their father was a Diabolonian born,) and has them to Eye-gate, where he raised a very high cross just in the face of Diabolus, and of his army, and there he hanged the young villains in defiance to Captain Past-hope, and of the horrible standard of the tyrant.

Now, this christian act of the brave Lord Willbewill, did greatly abash Captain Past-hope, discourage the army of Diabolus, put fear into the Diabolonian runagates in Mansoul, and put strength and courage into the captains, that belong to Emmanuel the Prince; for they without did gather, and that by this very act of my lord, that Mansoul was resolved to fight, and that the Diabolonians within the town could not do such things as Diabolus had hopes they would. Nor was this the only proof of the brave Lord Willbewill's honesty to the town, nor of his loyalty to his Prince, as will afterwards appear.

Now when the children of Prudent-thrifty, who dwelt with Mr. Mind, (for Thrifty left children with Mr. Mind, when he was also committed to prison, and their names were Gripe and Rake-all; these he begat of Mr. Mind's bastard daugter, whose name was Mrs. Holdfast-bad;) I say, when his children perceived how the Lord Willbewill had served them that dwelt with him, what do they but (lest they should drink of the same cup) endeavor to make their escape. But Mr. Mind being wary of it, took them and put them in hold in his house till morning, (for this was done over night,) and remembering that by the law of Mansoul, all Diabolonians were to die, and to be sure they were at least by father's side such, and some say by mother's side too, what does he but takes them and puts them in chains, and carries them to the selfsame place where my lord hanged his two before, and there he hanged them.

The townsmen also took great encouragement at this act of Mr. Mind, and did what they could to have taken some more of these Diabolonian troublers of Mansoul; but at that time the rest lay so close, that they could not be apprehended; so they set against them a diligent watch, and went every man to his place.

I told you a little before that Diabolus and his army were somewhat abashed and dismayed at the sight of what my Lord Willbewill did, when he hanged up those two young Diabolonians; but his discouragement quickly turned itself into furious madness and rage against the town of Mansoul, and fight it he would. Also the townsmen, and captains within, they had their hopes and their expectations heightened, believing at last the day would be theirs, so they feared them the less. Their Subordinate Preacher too made a sermon about it, and he took that theme for his text, *Gad, a troop shall overcome him, but he shall overcome at last.* Whence he shewed, that though Mansoul should be sorely put to it at the first, yet the victory should most certainly be Mansoul's at the last.

So Diabolus commanded that his drummer should beat a charge against the town, and the captains also that were in the town, sounded a charge against them, but they had no drum, they were trumpets of silver with which they sounded against them. Then they which were of the camp of Diabolus came down to the town to take it, and the captains in the castle, with the slingers at Mouth-gate, played upon them amain. And now there was nothing heard in the camp of Diabolus but horrible rage and blasphemy; but in the town good words, prayer, and singing of psalms: the enemy replied with horrible objections, and the terribleness of their drum; but the town made answer with slapping of their slings, and the melodious noise of their trumpets. And thus the fight lasted for several days together, only now and then they had some small intermission, in the which the townsmen refreshed themselves, and the captains made ready for another assault.

The captains of Emmanuel were clad in silver armor, and the soldiers in that which was of proof; the soldiers of Diabolus were clad in iron, which was made to give place to Emmanuel's engine-shot. In the town some were hurt, and some were greatly wounded. Now the worst of it was, a surgeon was scarce in Mansoul, for that Emmanuel at this time was absent. Howbeit, with the leaves of a tree the wounded were kept from dying; yet their wounds did greatly putrify, and some did grievously stink. Of the townsmen these were wounded to wit:

My Lord Reason, he was wounded in the head.

Another that was wounded was the brave Lord-Mayor, he was wounded in the eye.

Another that was wounded was Mr. Mind, he recieved his wound about the stomach.

The honest Subordinate Preacher also, he recieved a shot not far off from the heart, but none of these were mortal.

Many also of the inferior sort, were not only wounded, but slain outright.

Now in the camp of Diabolus were wounded and slain a considerable number. For instance:

Captain Rage, he was wounded, and so was Captain Cruel.

Captain Damnation was made to retreat, and to entrench himself further off of Mansoul; the standard also of Diabolus was beaten down, and his standard-bearer, Captain Much-hurt, had his brains beat out with a sling-stone, to the no little grief and shame of his prince Diabolus.

Many also of the Doubters were slain outright, though enough of them are left alive to make Mansoul shake and totter. Now the victory that day being turned to Mansoul, did put great valor into the townsmen and captains, and did cover Diabolus, camp with a cloud, but withal it made them far more furious. So the next day Mansoul rested, and commanded that the bells should be rung; the trumpets also joyfully sounded, and the captains shouted round the town.

My Lord Willbwill also was not idle, but did notable service within against the domestics, or the Diabolonians that were in the town, not only by keeping of them in awe, for he lighted on one at last whose

name was Mr Any-thing, a fellow of whom mention was made before; for it was he, if you remember, that brought the three fellows to Diabolus, whom the Diabolonians took out of Captain Boanerges' company, and that persuaded them to list themselves under the tyrant, to fight against the army of Shaddai; my Lord Willbewill did also take a notable Diabolonian, whose name was Loose-foot; this Loose-foot was a scout to the vagabonds in Mansoul, and that did use to carry tidings out of Mansoul to the camp, and out of the camp to those of the enemies in Mansoul; both these my Lord sent away safe to Mr. True-man the gaoler, with a commandment to keep them in irons; for he intended then to have them out to be crucified, when it would be for the best to the corporation, and most for the discouragement of the camp of the enemies.

My Lord-Mayor also, though he could not stir about so much as formerly, because of the wound that he lately received, yet gave he out orders to all that were the natives in Mansoul, to look to their watch, and stand upon their guard, and as occasion should offer, to prove themselves men.

Mr. Conscience the preacher, he also did his utmost to keep all his good documents alive upon the hearts of the people of Mansoul.

Well, awhile after the captains and stout ones of the town of Mansoul agreed, and resolved upon a time to make a sally out upon the camp of Diabolus, and this must be done in the night, and there was the folly of Mansoul, (for the night is always the best for the enemy, but the worst for Mansoul to fight in;) but yet they would do it, their courage was so high; their last victory also still stuck in their memories.

So the night appointed being come, the Prince's brave captains cast lots who should lead the van in this new and desperate expedition against Diabolus, and against his Diabolonian army; and the lot fell to Captain Credence, to Captain Experience, and to Captain Good-hope, to lead the Forlorn-hope. (This Captain Experience the Prince created such when himself did reside in the town of Mansoul;) so, as I said, they made their sally out upon the army that lay in the siege against them; and their hap was to fall in with the main body of their enemy. Now Diabolus and his men being expertly accustomed to night work, took the alarm presently, and were as ready to give them battle as if they had sent him word of their coming. Wherefore to it they went amain, and blows were hard on every side; the hell-drum also beat furiously, while the trumpets of the Prince most sweetly sounded. And thus the battle was joined, and Captain Insatiable looked to the enemies' carriages, and waited when he should receive some prey.

The Prince's captains fought it stoutly, beyond what, indeed, could be expected they should; they wounded many; they made the whole army of Diabolus to make a retreat. But I cannot tell how, but the brave Captain Credence, Captain Good-hope, and Captain Experience, as they were upon the pursuit, cutting down, and following hard after the enemy in the rear, Captain Credence stumbled and fell, by which fall he caught so great a hurt, that he could not rise till Captain Experience did help him up, at which their men were put in disorder; the Captain also was so full of pain that he could not forbear but aloud to cry out; at this the other two captains fainted, supposing that Captain Credence had received his mortal wound; their men also were more, disordered and had no list to fight. Now Diabolus being very observing, though at this time as yet he was put to the worst, perceiving that an halt was made among the men that were the pursuers, what does he, but taking it for granted that the captains were either wounded or dead, he therefore makes at first a stand, then faces about, and so comes up upon the Prince's army with as much of his fury as hell could help him to, and his hap was to fall in just among the three captains, Captain Credence, Captain Good-hope, and Captain Experience, and did cut, wound, and pierce them so dreadfully, that what through discouragement, what through disorder, and what through the wounds that now they had received, and also the loss of much blood, they scarce were able, though they had for their power the three best hands in all Mansoul, to get safe into the hold again.

Now when the body of the Prince's army saw how these three captains were put to the worst, they thought it their wisdom to make as safe and good a retreat as they could, and so returned by the sally-port again; and so there was an end of this present action. But Diabolus was so flushed with this night's work, that he promised himself in a few days an easy and complete conquest over the town of Mansoul.—Wherefore, on the day following, he comes up to the sides thereof with great boldness, and demands entrance, and that forthwith they deliver themselves up to his government. The Diabolonians, too, that were within, they began to be somewhat brisk, as we shall show afterward.

But the valiant Lord-Mayor replied, that what he got he must get by force; for as long as Emmanuel their Prince was alive, (though he at present was not so with them as they wished,) they should never consent to yield up Mansoul to another.

And with that the Lord Willbewill stood up and said, "Diabolus, thou master of the den, and enemy to all that is good, we poor inhabitants of the town of Mansoul are too well acquainted with thy rule and government, and with the end of those things that for certain will follow submitting to thee, to do it: Wherefore, though while we were without knowledge we suffered thee to take us, (as the bird that saw not the snare fell into the hand of the fowler,) yet since we have been turned from darkness to light, we have also been turned from the power of Satan to God. And though through thy subtlety, and the subtlety of the Diabolonians within, we have sustained much loss, and also plunged ourselves into much perplexity, yet give up ourselves, lay down our arms, and yield to so horrid a tyrant as thou, we will not; die upon the place we choose rather to do. Besides, we have hopes that in time deliverance will come from court unto us; and therefore we will yet maintain a war against thee."

This brave speech of the Lord Willbewill, with that also of the Lord-Mayor, did somewhat abate the boldness of Diabolus, though it kindled the fury of his rage. It also encouraged the townsmen and captains; yea, it was as a plaister to the brave Captain Credence's wound; for you must know that a brave speech now, when the captains of the town, with their men of war came home routed, and when the enemy took courage and boldness at the success that he had obtained, to draw up to the walls, and demand entrance, as he did, was in season, and also advantageous.

The Lord Willbewill also did play the man within; for while the captains and soldiers were in the field, he was in arms in the town; and wherever by him there was a Diabolonian found, they were forced to feel the weight of his heavy hand, and also the edge of his penetrating sword; many therefore of the Diabolonians he wounded, as the Lord Cavil, the Lord Brisk, the Lord Pragmatic, and the Lord Murmur; several also of the meaner sort he did sorely maim; though there cannot at this time an account be given of any that he slew outright. The cause, or rather the advantage that my Lord Willbewill had at this time to do thus, was for that the captains were gone out to fight the enemy in the field. For now, thought the Diabolonians within, is our time to stir and make an uproar in the town. What do they therefore, but quickly get themselves into a body, and fall forthwith to hurricaning in Mansoul, as if now nothing but whirlwind and tempest should be there? Wherefore, as I said, he takes this opportunity to fall in among them with his men, cutting and slashing with courage that was undaunted; at which the Diabolonians with all haste dispersed themselves to their holds, and my Lord to his place as before.

This brave act of my Lord did somewhat revenge the wrongs done by Diabolus to the captains, and also did let them know, that Mansoul was not to be parted with for the loss of a victory or two; wherefore the wing of the tyrant was clipped again, as to boasting, I mean, in comparison of what he would have done if the Diabolonians had put the town to the same plight to which he had put the captains.

Well, Diabolus yet resolves to have the other bout with Mansoul; for thought he, since I beat them once, I may beat them twice. Wherefore he commanded his men to be ready at such an hour of the night to make a fresh assault upon the town, and he gave out in special, that they should bend all their force against Feel-gate, and attempt to break into the town through that. The word that then he did give to his officers and soldeirs was Hell-fire. And, said he, if we break in upon them, as I wish we do, either with some or with all our force, let them that break in look to it, that they forget not the word. And let nothing be heard in the town of Mansoul but Hell-fire! Hell-fire! Hell-fire! The drummer was also to beat without ceasing, and the standard-bearers were to display their colors; the soldiers too, were to put on what courage they could, and to see that they played manfully their parts against the town.

So the night was come, and all things by the tyrant made ready for the work; he suddenly makes his assault upon Feel-gate; and after he had a while struggled there, he throws the gates wide open; for the truth is, those gates were but weak, and so most easily made to yield. When Diabolus had thus far made his attempt, he placed his captains, to wit, Torment, and No-ease there; so he attemted to press forward, but the Prince's captains came down upon him, and made his entrance more difficult than he desired. And to speak truth, they made what resistance they could; but the three of the best and most valiant captains being wounded, and by their wounds made much incapable of doing the town that service they would, (and all the rest having more than their hands full of Doubters and their captains that did follow Diabolus,) they were overpowered with force; nor could they keep them out of the town. Wherefore the Prince's men, and their captains, betook themselves to the castle, as the strong hold of the town; and this they did, partly for the security of the town, and partly, or rather chiefly, to preserve to Emmanuel the

prerogative-royal of Mansoul; for so was the castle of Mansoul.

The captains therefore being fled into the castle, the enemy, without much resistance, possess themselves of the rest of the town, and spreading themselves as they went into every corner, they cried out as they marched, according to the command of the tyrant, Hell-fire! Hell-fire! so that nothing for awhile throughout the town of Mansoul could be heard but the dreadful noise of Hell-fire! together with the roaring of Diabolus' drum. And now did the clouds hang black over Mansoul, nor to reason did any thing but ruin seem to attend it. Diabolus also quartered his soldiers in the houses of the inhabitants of the town of Mansoul. Yea, the Subordinate Preacher's house was as full of these outlandish Doubters as ever it could hold; and so was my Lord-Mayor's and my Lord Willbewill's also. Yea, where was there a corner, a cottage, a barn, or a hogstye, that were not full of these vermin; yea, they turned the men of the town out of their houses, and would lie in their beds, and sit at their tables themselves. Ah poor Mansoul! Now thou feelest the fruits of sin, what venom was in the flattering words of Mr. Carnal-security. They made great havoc of whatever they laid their hands on; yea, they fired the town in several places; many young children also were by them dashed in pieces; yea, those that were yet unborn they destroyed in their mother's wombs; for you must needs think that it could not be otherwise; for what conscience, what pity, what bowels, or compassion, can any expect at the hands of outlandish Doubters? Many in Mansoul that were women, both young and old, they forced, ravished, and beast-like abused; so that they swooned, miscarried, and many of them died, and so lay at the top of every street, and in all by-places of the town.

And now did Mansoul seem to be nothing but a den of dragons, an emblem of hell, and a place of total darkness. Now did Mansoul lie, almost like the barren wilderness; nothing but nettles, briers, thorns, weeds, and stinking things, seemed now to cover the face of Mansoul. I told you before, how that these Diabolonian Doubters turned the men of Mansoul out of their beds; and now I will add, they wounded them, they mauled them, yea, and almost brained many of them. Many did I say? Yea, most, if not all of them. Mr. Conscience they so wounded, yea, and his wounds so festering, that he could have no ease day nor night, but lay as if continually upon a rack; (but that Shaddai rules all, certainly they had slain him outright;) my Lord-Mayor they so abused, that they almost put out his eyes; and had not my Lord Willbewill got into the castle, they intended to have chopped him all to pieces; for they did look upon him (as his heart now stood) to be one of the very worst that was in Mansoul against Diabolus and his crew. And indeed he hath showed himself a man, and more of his exploits you will hear of afterwards.

Now a man might have walked for days together in Mansoul, and scarce have seen one in the town that looked like a religious man. Oh the fearful state of Mansoul now! Now every corner swarmed with outlandish Doubters; red-coats and black-coats walked the town by clusters, and filled up all the houses with hideous noises, vain songs, lying stories, and blasphemous language against Shaddai and his Son. Now also, those Diabolonians that lurked in the walls, and dens, and holes, that were in the town of Mansoul, came forth and shewed themselves; yea, walked with open face in company with the Doubters that were in Mansoul. Yea, they had more boldness now to walk the streets, to haunt the houses, and to shew themselves abroad, than had any of the honest inhabitants of the now woful town of Mansoul.

But Diabolus and his outlandish men were not at peace in Mansoul; for they were not there entertained as were the captains and forces of Emmanuel; the townsmen did brow-beat them what they could; nor did they partake or make destruction of any of the necessaries of Mansoul, but that which they seized on against the townsmen's will; what they could they hid from them, and what they could not, they had with an ill-will. They, poor hearts, had rather have had their room than their company; but they were at present their captives, and their captives for the present they were forced to be. But, I say, they discountenanced them as much as they were able, and showed them all the dislike that they could.

The captains also from the castle did hold them in continual play with their slings, to the chafing and fretting of the minds of the enemies. True, Diabolus made a great many attempts to have broken open the gates of the castle; but Mr. Godly-fear was made keeper of that, and he was a man of that courage, conduct, and valor, that it was in vain as long as life lasted within him, to think to do that work though mostly desired; wherefore all the attempts that Diabolus made against him were fruitless; (I have wished sometimes that the man had the whole rule of the town of Mansoul.)

Well, this was the condition of the town of Mansoul for about two years and a half; the body of the town was the seat of war; the people of the town were driven into

holes, and the glory of Mansoul was laid in the dust; what rest then could be to the inhabitants, what peace could Mansoul have, and what sun could shine upon it? Had the enemy lain so long without in the plain against the town, it had been enough to have famished them; but now when they shall be within, when the town shall be their tent, their trench, and fort, against the castle that was in the town; when the town shall be against the town and shall serve to be a fence to the enemies of her strength and life; I say, when they shall make use of the forts, and townholds, to secure themselves in, even till they shall take, spoil, and demolish the castle, this was terrible and yet this was now the state of the town of Mansoul.

After the town of Mansoul had been in this sad lamentable condition for so long a time as I have told you, and no petitions that they presented their Prince with (all this while) could prevail: the inhabitants of the town, to wit, the elders and chiefs of Mansoul gathered together, and after some time spent in condoling their miserable state, and this miserable judgment coming upon them, they agreed together to draw up yet another petition, and to send it away to Emmanuel for relief. But Mr. Godly-fear stood up, and answered, that he knew that his Lord the Prince never did, nor ever would receive a petition for these matters from the hand of any whoever, unless the Lord Secretary's hand was to it, (and this, quoth he, is the reason that you prevailed not all this while.) Then they said, they would draw up one, and get the Lord Secretary's hand to it. But Mr. Godly-fear answered again, that he knew also that the Lord Secretary would not set his hand to any petition that himself had not an hand in composing and drawing up; and besides, saith he, the Prince doth know my Lord Secretary's hand from all the hands in the world; wherefore he cannot be deceived by any pretence whatever; wherefore my advice is, that you go to my Lord, and implore him to lend you his aid, (now he did yet abide in the castle where all the captains and men at arms were.)

So they heartily thanked Mr. Godly-fear, took his counsel, and did as he had bidden them; so they went and came to my Lord, and made known the cause of their coming to him, to wit, that since Mansoul was in so deplorable a condition, his highness would be pleased to undertake to draw up a petition for them to Emmanuel, the Son of the mighty Shaddai, and to their King and his Father by him.

Then said the Secretary to them, What petition is it that you would have me draw up for you? But they said, our Lord knows best the state and condition of the town of Mansoul; and how we are backslidden and degenerate from the Prince; thou also knowest who is come up to war against us, and how Mansoul is now the seat of war. My Lord knows moreover, what barbarous usages our men, women, and children, have suffered at their hands, and how our home-bred Diabolonians do walk now with more business than dare the townsmen in the streets of Mansoul. Let our Lord, therefore, according to the wisdom of God that is in him, draw up a petition for his poor servants to our Prince Emmanuel. Well, said the Lord Secretary, I will draw up a petition for you, and will also set my hand thereto. Then said they, But when shall we call for it at the hands of our Lord? But he answered, Yourselves must be present at the doing of it; yea, you must put your desires to it True, the hand and pen shall be mine, but the ink and paper must be yours, else how can you say it is your petition? Nor have I need to petition for myself, because I have not offended.

He also addeth as followeth, No petition goes from me in my name to the Prince, and so to his Father by him, but when the people that are chiefly concerned therein, do join in heart and soul in the matter, for that must be inserted therein.

So they did heartily agree with the sentence of the Lord, and a petition was forthwith drawn up for them. But now who should carry it? that was next. But the Secretary advised that Captain Credence should carry it, for he was a well-spoken man. They therefore called for him, and propounded to him the business.—Well, said the captain, I gladly accept of the motion; and though I am lame, I will do this business for you, with as much speed, and as well as I can.

The contents of the petition were to this purpose:

O our Lord and Sovereign Prince Emmanuel, the potent, the long-suffering Prince; grace is poured into thy lips, and to thee belongs mercy and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against thee. We, who are no more worthy to be called thy Mansoul, nor yet fit to partake of common benefits, do beseech thee, and thy Father by thee, to do away our transgression. We confess that thou mightest cast us away for them, but do it not for thy name sake; let the Lord rather take an opportunity at our miserable condition, to let out his bowels and compassion to us; we are compassed on every side; Lord, our own backslidings reprove us; our Diabolonians within our town fright us, and the army of the angel of the bottomless pit distresses us. Thy grace can be our salvation, and whither to go but to thee we know not.

Furthermore, O gracious Prince we have weakened our captains, and they are discouraged, sick, and of late some of them grievously worsted and beaten out of the field by the power and force of the tyrant. Yea, even those of our captains in whose valor we did formerly use to put most of our confidence, they are as wounded men. Besides, Lord, our enemies are lively, and they are strong, they vaunt and boast themselves, and do threaten to part us among themselves for a booty. They are fallen also upon us, Lord, with many thousand Doubters, such as with whom we cannot tell what to do; they are all grimlooked, and unmerciful ones, and they bid defiance to us and thee.

Our wisdom is gone, our power is gone, because thou art departed from us, nor have we what we may call ours, but sin, shame, and confusion of face for sin. Take pity upon us, O Lord, take pity upon us thy miserable town of Mansoul, and save us out of the hands of our enemies. Amen.

This petition, as was touched afore, was handed by the Lord Secretary, and carried to the court by the brave and most stout Captain Credence. Now he carried it out at Mouth-gate, for that, as I said, was the sally-port of the town; and he went and came to Emmanuel with it. Now how it came out, I do not know, but for certain it did, and that so far as to reach the ears of Diabolus. Thus I conclude, because that the tyrant had it presently by the end, and charged the town of Mansoul with it, saying, Thou rebellious and stubborn-hearted Mansoul, I will make thee to leave off petitioning; art thou yet for petitioning? I will make thee to leave. Yea, he also knew who the messenger was that carried the petition to the Prince, and it made him both to fear and rage.

Wherefore he commanded that his drum should be beat again, a thing that Mansoul could not abide to hear; but when Diabolus will have his drum beat, Mansoul must abide the noise. Well, the drum was beat, and the Diabolonians were gathered together.

Then said Diabolus, O ye stout Diabolonians, be it known unto you, that there is treachery hatched against us in the rebellious town of Mansoul; for albeit the town is in our possession, as you see, yet these miserable Mansoulians have attempted to dare, and have been so hardy, as yet to send to the court to Emmanuel for help. This I give you to understand, that ye may yet know how to carry it to the wretched town of Mansoul. Wherefore, O my trusty Diabolonians, I command that yet more and more ye distress this town of Mansoul, and vex it with your wiles, ravish their women, deflower their virgins, slay their children, brain their ancients, fire their town, and what other mischief you can; and let this be the reward of the Mansoulians from me, for their desperate rebellions against me.

This you see was the charge, but something stept in betwixt that and execution, for as yet there was but little more done than to rage.

Moreover, when Diabolus had done thus, he went the next day up to the castle-gates, and demanded that, upon pain of death, the gates should be opened to him, and that entrance should be given him, and his men that followed after. To whom Mr. Godly-fear replied, (for he it was that had the charge of that gate,) That the gate should not be opened unto him, nor to the men that followed after him. He said, moreover, that Mansoul when she had suffered awhile, should be made perfect, strengthened, settled.

Then said Diabolus, Deliver me then the men that have petitioned against me, especially CaptainCredence, that carried it to your Prince; deliver that varlet into my hands, and I will depart from the town.

Then up starts a Diabolonian, whose name was Mr. Fooling, and said, My lord offereth you fair, it is better for you that one man perish, than that your whole Mansoul should be undone.

But Mr. Godly-fear made him this reply; How long will Mansoul be kept out of the dungeon, when she hath given up her faith to Diabolus? As good lose the town as lose Captain Credence; for if one be gone, the other must follow. But to that Mr. Fooling said nothing.

Then did my Lord-Mayor reply, and said, O thou devouring tyrant, be it known unto thee, we shall hearken to none of thy words, we are resolved to resist thee as long as a captain, a man, a sling, and a stone to throw at thee shall be found in the town of Mansoul. But Diabolus answered, Do you hope, do you wait, do you look for help and deliverance? You have sent to Emmanuel, but your wickedness sticks too close in your skirts, to let innocent prayers come out of your lips. Think you that you shall be prevailers and prosper in this design? You will fail in your wish, you will fail in your attempts; for it is not only I, but your Emmanuel is against you. Yea, it is he that hath sent me against you to subdue you; for what then do you hope, or by what means will you escape?

Then said the Lord-Mayor, We have sinned indeed, but that shall be no help to thee, for our Emmanuel hath said it, and that in great faithfulness, *And him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.* He hath also told us, O! thou our enemy, that all manner of sin and blasphemy shall

be forgiven to the sons of men. Therefore we dare not despair, but will look for, wait for and hope for deliverance still.

Now by this time Captain Credence was come from the court from Emmanuel, to the castle of Mansoul; and he returned to them a packet. So my Lord-Mayor hearing that Captain Credence was come, withdrew himself from the noise of the roaring of the tyrant, and left him to yell at the wall of the town, or against the gates of the castle. So he came up to the captain's lodgings, and saluting him, he asked him of his welfare, and what was the best news at court? But when he asked Captain Credence that, the water stood in his eyes. Then said the Captain, Cheer up my Lord, for all will be well in time; and with that he first produced his packet, and laid it by, but that the Lord-Mayor and the rest of the captains took for a sign of good tidings. Now a season of grace being come, he sent for all the captains and elders of the town that were here and there in their lodgings in the castle, and upon their guard, to let them know that Captain Credence was returned from the court, and that he had something in general and something in special to communicate to them. So they all came up to him, and saluted him, and asked him concerning his journey, and what was the best news at court? And he answered them as he had done the Lord-Mayor before, That all would be well at last. Now when the captain had thus saluted them, he opened his packet, and thence did draw out his several notes for those that he had sent for. And the first note was for my Lord-Mayor, wherein was signified,

That the Prince Emmanuel had taken it well that my Lord-Mayor had been so true and trusty in his office, and the great concerns that lay upon him for the town and people of Mansoul. Also he bid him to know, that he took it well that he had been so bold for his Prince Emmanuel, and had engaged so faithfully in his cause against Diabolus. He also signified at the close of his letter, that he should shortly receive his reward.

The second note that came out was for the noble Lord Willbewill, wherein there was signified, That his Prince Emmanuel did well understand how valiant and courageous he had been for the honor of his Lord, now in his abscence, and when his name was under contempt by Diabolus. There was signified also, that his Prince had taken it well that he had been so faithful to the town of Mansoul, in his keeping so strict a hand and eye over, and so strict a rein upon the necks of the Diabolonians that did still lie lurking in their several holes in the famous town of Mansoul.

He signified, moreover, how that he understood that my lord had with his own hand, done great execution upon some of the chief of the rebels there, to the great discouragement of the adverse party, and to the good example of the whole town of Mansoul; and that shortly his lordship should have his reward.

The third note came out for the Subordinate Preacher, wherein was signified, That his Prince took it well from him that he had so honestly and so faithfully performed his office, and executed the trust committed to him by his Lord, while he exhorted, rebuked, and forwarned Mansoul, according to the laws of the town. He signified, moreover, that he took it well at his hand, that he called to fasting, to sackcloth and ashes, when Mansoul was under her revolt. Also that he called for the aid of the Captain Boanerges to help in so weighty a work. And that shortly he also should receive his reward.

The fourth note came out for Mr. Godly-fear, wherein his Lord thus signified, That his Lordship observed, that he was the only man in Mansoul that detected Mr. Carnal-security, as the only one, that through his subtlety and cunning, had obtained for Diabolus a defection and decay of goodness in the blessed town of Mansoul. Moreover, his Lord gave him to understand, that he still remembered his tears and mourning for the state of Mansoul. It was also observed by the same note, That his Lord took notice of his detecting of this Mr. Carnal-security, at his own table among the guests, in his own house, and that in the midst of his jolliness, even while he was seeking to perfect his villianies against the town of Mansoul. Emmanuel also took notice, that this Reverend person Mr. Godly-fear, stood stoutly to it at the gates of the castle, against all the threats and attempts of the tyrant, and that he put the townsmen in a way to make their petition to their Prince, so as that he might accept thereof, and as that they might obtain an answer of peace; and that therefore shortly he should receive his reward.

After all this, there was yet produced a note which was written to the whole town of Mansoul, whereby they perceived that their Lord took notice of their so often repeating of petitions to him; and that they should see more of the fruits of such their doings in time to come. Their Prince did also therein tell them, That he took it well that their heart and mind now at last abode fixed upon him and his ways, though Diabolus had made such inroads upon them; and that neither flatteries on the one hand, nor hardships on the other, could make them yield to serve his cruel designs.

There was also inserted at the bottom of this note, That his Lordship had left the town of Mansoul in the hands of the Lord Secretary, and under the conduct of Captain Credence, saying, Beware that you yet yield yourselves under their governance, and in due time you shall receive your reward.

So after the brave Captain Credence had delivered his notes to those to whom they belonged, he retired himself to my Lord Secretary's lodgings, and there spends time in conversing with him; for they two were very great one with another, and did indeed know more how things would go with Mansoul than did all the townsmen besides. The Lord Secretary also loved the Captain Credence dearly; yea, many a good bit was sent him from my Lord's table; also he might have a shew of countenance when the rest of Mansoul lay under the clouds. So after some time for converse was spent, the captain betook himself to his chambers to rest. But it was not long after but my lord did send for the captain again; so the captain came to him, and they greeted one another with usual salutations. Then said the captain to the Lord Secretary, what hath my Lord to say to his servant? So the Lord Secretary took him, and had him aside, and after a sign or two of more favor, he said, I have made thee the Lord's lieutenant over all the forces in Mansoul; so that from this day forward all men in Mansoul shall be at thy word, and thou shalt be he that shall lead in, and that shall lead out Mansoul. Thou shalt therefore manage, according to thy place, the war for thy Prince, and for the town of Mansoul, against the force and power of Diabolus, and at thy command shall the rest of the captains be.

Now the townsmen began to perceive what interest the captain had, both with the court, and also with the Lord Secretary in Mansoul; for no man before could speed when sent, nor bring such good news from Emmanuel as he. Wherefore what do they, after some lamentation, that they made no more use of him in their distresses, but send by their Subordinate Preacher to the Lord Secretary, to desire him, that all that ever they were and had, might be put under the government, care, custody and conduct, of Captain Credence.

So their preacher went and did his errand, and received this answer from the mouth of his Lord, That Captain Credence should be the great doer in all the King's army, against the King's enemies, and also for the welfare of Mansoul. So he bowed to the ground, and thanked his Lordship, and returned and told his news to the townsfolk. But all this was done with all imaginable secrecy, because the foes had yet great strength in the town. But,

To return to our story again: When Diabolus saw himself thus boldly confronted by the Lord-Mayor, and perceived the stoutness of Mr. Godly-fear, he fell into a rage, and forthwith called a council of war, that he might be revenged on Mansoul. So all the princes of the pit came together, and old Incredulity at the head of them, with all the captains of his army. So they consult what to do. Now the effect and conclusion of the council that day was, how they might take the castle; because they could not conclude themselves masters of the town so long as that was in the possession of their enemies. So one advised this way, and another advised that; but when they could not agree in their verdict, Apollyon, that president of the council, stood up, and thus he began: My brotherhood, quoth he, I have two things to propound unto you; and my first is this: Let us withdraw ourselves from the town into the plain again, for our presence here will do us no good, because the castle is yet in our enemies' hands; nor is it possible that we should take that, so long as so many brave captains are in it, and that this bold fellow Godly-fear is made the keeper of the gates of it.

Now when we have withdrawn ourselves into the plain, they of their own accord, will be glad of some little ease; and it may be of their own accord, they again may begin to be remiss; and even their so being will give them a bigger blow than we can possible give them ourselves. But if that should fail, our going forth of the town may draw the captains out after us, and you know what it cost them, when we fought them in the field before. Besides, can we but draw them out into the field, we may lay an ambush behind the town, which shall, when they are come forth abroad, rush in, and take possession of the castle. But Beelzebub stood up, and replied, saying, It is impossible to draw them all off from the castle; some you may be sure will lie there to keep that; wherefore it will be but in vain thus to attempt, unless we were sure that they will all come out. He therefore concluded that what was done must be done by some other means. And the most likely means that the greatest of their heads could invent, was that which Apollyon had advised before, to wit, to get the townsmen again to sin. For, said he, it is not our being in the town, nor in the field, nor our fighting, nor our klling of their men, that can make us the masters of Mansoul: for so long as one in the town is able to lift up his finger against us, Emmanuel will take their parts; and if he shall take their parts, we know what time

a-day it will be with us. Wherefore, for my part, quoth he, there is, in my judgment, no way to bring them into bondage to us, like inventing a way to make them sin. Had we, said he, left all our Doubters at home, we had done as well as we have done now, unless we could have made them the masters and governors of the castle; for Doubters, at a distance, are but like objections repelled with arguments. Indeed can we but get them into the hold, and make them possessors of that, the day will be our own. Let us therefore withdraw ourselves into the plain, (not expecting that the captains in Mansoul should follow us;) but yet I say, let us do this, and before we so do, let us advise again with our trusty Diabolonians, that are yet in their holds of Mansoul, and set them to work to betray the town to us; for they indeed must do it, or it will be left undone for ever. By these sayings of Beelzebub, (for I think it was he that gave this counsel,) the whole conclave was forced to be of his opinion, to wit, that the way to get the castle was to get the town to sin. Then they fell to inventing by what means to do this thing.

Then Lucifer stood up, and said, The counsel of Beelzebub is pertinent; now the way to bring this to pass, in mine opinion, is this: Let us withdraw our force from the town of Mansoul; let us do this; and let us terrify them no more, either with summons or threats, or with the noise of our drum, or any other awakening means. Only let us lie in the field at a distance, and be as if we regarded them not; (for frights I see do but awaken them, and make them stand more to their arms.) I have also another stratagem in my head: You know Mansoul is a market-town, and a town that delights in commerce; what therefore, if some of our Diabolonians shall feign themselves far countrymen, and shall go out and bring to the market of Mansoul some of our wares to sell; and what matter at what rates they sell their wares, though it be but for half the worth. Now, let those that thus shall trade in their market, be those that are witty and true to us, and I will lay my crown to pawn it will do. There are two that are come to my thoughts already, that I think will be arch at this work, and they are Mr. Penny-wise-pound-foolish, and Mr. Get-i'th'-hundred-and-lose-i'th-shire; nor is this man with the long name at all inferior to the other. What also, if you join with them Mr. Sweet-world and Mr. Present-good, they are men that are civil and cunning, but our true friends and helpers. Let these, with as many more, engage in this business for us; and let Mansoul be taken up in much business, and let them grow full and rich, and this is the way to get ground of them; remember ye not that thus we prevailed upon Laodicea; and how many at present we do hold in this snare! Now, when they begin to grow full, they will forget their misery; and if we shall not affright them they may happen to fall asleep, and so be got to neglect their town-watch, their castle-watch, as well as their watch at the gates.

Yea, may we not by this means so cumber Mansoul with abundance, that they shall be forced to make of their castle a warehouse instead of a garrison fortified against us, and a receptacle for men of war. Thus, if we get our goods and commodities thither, I reckon that the castle is more than half ours. Besides, could we so order it, that it should be filled with such kind of wares, then if we made a sudden assault upon them, it would be hard for the captains to take shelter there. Do you know that of the parable, *The deceitfulness of riches choke the word:* and again, *When the heart is overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the cares of this life, all mischief comes upon them at unawares.*

Furthermore, my lords, quoth he, you very well know, that it is not easy for a people to be filled with our things, and not to have some of our Dibolonians as retainers to their houses and services. Where is a Mansoulian that is full of this world, that has not for his servants and waiting-men, Mr. Profuse, or Mr. Prodigality, or some other of our Diabolonian gang, as Mr. Voluptuous, Mr. Pragmatical, Mr. Ostentation, or the like? Now these can take the castle of Mansoul, or blow it up, or make it unfit for a garrison for Emmanuel; and any of these will do. Yea, these, for ought I know, may do it for us sooner than an army of twenty thousand men. Wherefor, to end as I began, my advice is, that we quietly withdraw ourselves, not offering any further force, or forcible attempts upon the castle, at least at this time, and let us set on foot our new project; and let us see if that will not make them destroy themselves.

This advice was highly applauded by them all, and was accounted the very masterpiece of hell; to wit, to choke Mansoul with a fulness of this world, and to surfeit her heart with the good things thereof. But see how things meet together; just as this Diabolonian council was broken up, Captain Credence received a letter from Emmanuel; the contents of which were these. That upon the third day he would meet him in the field in the plains about Mansoul. Meet me in field? quoth the captain, what meaneth my Lord by this? I know not what he meaneth by meeting of

me in the field. So he took the note in his hand, and did carry it to my Lord Secretary, to ask his thoughts thereupon, (for my Lord was a seer in all matters concerning the King, and also for the good and comfort of the town of Mansoul.) So he shewed my Lord the note, and desired his opinion thereof. For my part, quoth Captain Credence, I know not the meaning thereof. So my Lord did take and read it, and after a little pause he said, "The Diabolonians have had against Mansoul a great consultation to-day; they have, I say this day been contriving the utter ruin of the town; and the result of the council is, to set Mansoul into such a way, which, if taken, will surely make her destroy herself. And to this end they are making ready for their own departure out of the town, intending to betake themselves to the field again, and there to lie till they shall see whether this their project will take or no. But be thou ready with the men of thy Lord, for on the third day they will be in the plain, there to fall upon the Diabolonians; for the Prince will by that time be in the field; yea, by that it is break of day, sun-rising, or before, and that with a mighty force against them. So he shall be before them, and thou shalt be behind them, and betwixt you both their army shall be destroyed."

When Captain Credence heard this, away he goes to the rest of the captains, and tells them what a note he had awhile since received from the hand of Emmanuel; and said he, that which was dark therein, has my Lord the Lord Secretary, expounded unto me. He told them moreover, what by himself, and by them, must be done to answer the mind of their Lord. Then were the captains glad; and Captain Credence commanded that all the King's trumpeters should ascend to the battlements of the castle, and there in the audience of Diabolus, and of the whole town of Mansoul, make the best music that heart could invent. Then the trumpeters did as they were commanded. They got themselves up to the top of the castle, and thus they began to sound; then did Diabolus start, and said, "What can be the meaning of this; they neither sound boot and saddle, nor horse and away, nor a charge? What do these mad men mean, that they should be so merry and glad?" Then answered him one of themselves, and said, "This is for joy that their Prince Emmanuel is come to relieve the town of Mansoul; that to this end he is at the head of an army, and that this relief is near."

The men of Mansoul were also greatly concerned at this melodious charm of the trumpets; they said, yea, they answered one another, saying, "This can be no harm to us; surely this can be no harm to us." Then said the Diabolonians "What had we best to do? And it was answered, it was best to quit the town; and that said one, ye may do in pursuance of your last council, and by so doing, also be better able to give the enemy battle, should an army from without come upon us. So on the second day they withdrew themselves from Mansoul, and abode in the plains without; but they encamped themselves before Eyegate, in what terrene and terrible manner they could. The reason why they could not abide in the town, (besides the reasons that were debated in the last conclave,) was, for that they were not possessed of the strong hold, and because, said they, we shall have more convenience to fight, and also to fly, if need be, when we are encamped in the open plains. Besides, the town would have been a pit for them, rather than a place of defence, had the Prince come up, and enclosed them fast therein. Therefore they betook themselves to the field, that they might also be out of the reach of the slings, by which they were much annoyed all the while that they were in the town.

Well, the time that the captains were to fall upon the Diabolonians being come, they eagerly prepared themselves for action; for Captain Credence having told the captains over night, that they should meet their Prince in the field tomorrow, was like oil to flaming fire; for of a long time they had been at a distance; they therefore were for this the more earnest and desirous of the work. So, as I said, the hour being come, Captain Credence, with the rest of the men of war, drew out their forces before it was day by the sally-port of the town. And being all ready, Captain Credence went up to the head of the army, and gave to the rest of the captains the word, and they to their under officers and soldiers; the word was, "The sword of the Prince Emmanuel, and the shield of Captain Credence;" which is in the Mansoulian tongue, "The word of God and faith." Then the captains fell on, and began roundly to front, and flank, and rear, Diabolus' camp.

Now they left Captain Experience in the town, because he was yet ill of his wounds which the Diabolonians had given him in the last fight. But when he perceived that the captains were at it, what does he, but calling for his crutches with haste, gets up, and away he goes to the battle, saying, "Shall I lie here while my brethren are in the fight, and when Emmanuel the Prince will shew himself in the field to his servants? But when the enemy saw the man come with his crutches, they were daunted yet the more; for, thought they, what spirit has possessed these Mansoulians, that they fight us upon their crutches!

Well, the captains, as I said, fell on, and did bravely handle their weapons, still crying out, and shouting as they laid on blows, "The sword of the Prince Emmanuel, and the shield of Captain Credence."

Now when Diabolus saw that the captians were come out, and that so valiantly they surrounded his men, he concluded, that for the present, nothing from them was to be looked for but blows, and the dints of their two-edged swords.

Wherefore he also falls upon the Prince's army, with all his deadly force. So the battle was joined. Now, who was it that at first Diabolus met with in the fight, but Captain Credence on the one hand, and Lord Willbewill on the other; now Willbewill's blows were like the blows of a giant, for that man had a strong arm, and he fell in upon the Election-Doubters, for they were the lifeguard of Diabolus, and he kept them in play a good while, cutting and battering shrewdly. Now when Captain Credence saw my Lord engaged, he did stoutly fall on, on the other hand, upon the same company also; so they put them to great disorder. Now Captain Good-hope had engaged the Vocation-doubters, and they were sturdy men; but the captain was a valiant man; Captain Experience did also send him some aid, so he made the Vocation-doubters to retreat. The rest of the armies were hotly engaged, and that on every side, and the Diabolonians did fight stoutly. Then did my Lord Secretary command that the slings from the castle should be played, and his men could throw stones at an hair's breadth. But after a while, those that were made to fly before the captains of the Prince, did begin to rally again, and they came up stoutly upon the rear of the Prince's army; wherefore the Prince's army began to faint; but remembering that they should see the face of their Prince by and by, they took courage, and a very fierce battle was fought. Then shouted the captains, saying, "The sword of the Prince Emmanuel, and the shield of Captain Credence;" and with that Diabolus gave back, thinking that more aid had been come. But no Emmanuel had as yet appeared. Moreover the battle did hang in doubt, and they made a little retreat on both sides. Now in the time of respite, Captain Credence bravely encouraged his men to stand to it, and Diabolus did the like as well as he could. But Captain Credence made a brave speech to his soldiers, the contents whereof here follow:

Gentlemen soldiers, and my brethren in this design, it rejoiceth me much to see in the field for our Prince this day so stout and so valiant an army, and such faithful lovers of Mansoul. You have hitherto, as hath become you, shewn yourselves men of truth and courage against the Diabolonian forces; so that for all their boasts they have not yet much cause to boast of their gettings. Now, take to yourselves your wonted courage, and shew yourselves men even this once only, for in a few minutes after the next engagement this time, you shall see your Prince shew himself in the field; for we must make this second assault upon this tyrant Diabolus, and then Emmanuel comes.

No sooner had the captain made this speech to his soldiers, but one Mr. Speedy came post to the captain from the Prince, to tell him that Emmanuel was at hand. This news, when the captain had received, he communicated to the other field-officers, and they again to their soldiers and men of war. Wherefore, like men raised from the dead, so the captains and their men arose, made up to the enemy, and cried as before, "The sword of the Prince Emmanuel, and the shield of Captain Credence."

The Diabolonians also bestirred themselves, and made resistance as well as they could: but in this last engagement the Diabolonians lost their courage, and many of the Doubters fell down dead to the ground. Now when they had been in the heat of battle about an hour more, Captain Credence lift up his eyes and saw, and beheld Emmanuel coming, and he came with colors flying, trumpets sounding, and the feet of his men scarce touched the ground, they hasted with that celerity towards the captains that were engaged. Then Captain Credence wheeled with his men to the town ward, and gave to Diabolus the field. So Emmanuel came upon him on the one side, and the enemy's place was betwixt them both; then again they fell to it afresh, and after a little while Emmanuel and Captain Credence met, still trampling down the slain as they came.

But when the captains saw that the Prince was come, and that he fell upon the Diabolonians on the other side, and that Captain Credence and his Highness had got them up betwixt them, they shouted, (they so shouted that the ground rent again,) saying, "The sword of Emmanuel, and the shield of Captain Credence." Now when Diabolus saw that he and his forces were so hard beset by the Prince and his princely army, what doth he and the lords of the pit that were with him, but make their escape, and forsake their army and leave them to fall by the hand of Emmanuel, and of his noble Captain Credence; so they fell all down slain before them, before the Prince, and before his royal army; there was not left so much as one Doubter alive, they lay spread upon the ground dead men, as one would spread dung upon the land.

When the battle was over, all things came into order in the camp; then the captains and elders of Mansoul came together to salute Emmanuel, while without the corporation; so they saluted him, and welcomed him, and that with a thousand welcomes, for that he was come to the borders of Mansoul again; so he smiled upon them, and said, Peace be to you. Then they addressed themselves to go to the town; they went then to go up to Mansoul, they, the Prince with all the new forces that now he had brought with him to the war. Also all the gates of the town were set open for his reception, so glad were they of his blessed return. And this was the manner and order of going into Mansoul.

1. As I said, all the gates of the town were set open, yea, the gates of the castle also; the elders too of the town of Mansoul, placed themselves at the gates of the town to salute him at his entrance thither: and so they did; for as he drew near, and approached towards the gates, they said, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in." And they answered again, "Who is the King of glory? And they made return to themselves, "The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates, even lift them up, ye everlasting doors," &c.

2. It was ordered also by those of Mansoul, that all the way, from the town-gates to those of the castle, his blessed Majesty should be entertained with the song, by them that had the best skill in music in all the town of Mansoul; then did the elders, and the rest of the men of Mansoul, answer one another as Emmanuel entered the town, till he came at the castle-gates, with songs and sound of trumpets, saying, They have seen thy goings, O God, even the goings of my God, my King in the sanctuary. So the singers went before, the players on instruments followed after, and among them were the damsels playing on timbrels.

3. Then the captains, (for I would speak a word of them,) in their order, waited on the Prince as he entered into the gates of Mansoul. Captain Credence went before, and Captain Good-hope with him; Captain Charity came behind with other of his companions, and Captain Patience followed after all, and the rest of the captains, some on the right hand, and some on the left, accompanied Emmanuel into Mansoul. And all the while the colors were displayed, the trumpets sounded, and continual shoutings were among the soldiers. The Prince himself rode into the town in his armor, which was all of beaten gold, and in his chariot, the pillars of it were of silver, the bottom thereof of gold, the covering of it was of purple; the midst thereof being paved with love for the daughters of the town of Mansoul.

4. When the Prince was come to the entrance of Mansoul, he found all the streets strewed with lilies and flowers, curiously decked with boughs and branches from the green trees that stood round about the town. Every door also was filled with persons who had adorned every one their forepart against their house with something of variety and singular excellency to entertain him withal as he passed in the streets; they also themselves, as Emmanuel passed by, did welcome him with shouts and acclamations of joy, saying, Blessed be the Prince that cometh in the name of his Father Shaddai.

5. At the castle-gates the elders of Mansoul, to wit, the Lord-Mayor, the Lord Willbewill, the Subordinate Preacher, Mr. Knowledge, and Mr. Mind, with other of the gentry of the place, saluted Emmanuel again. They bowed before him, they kissed the dust of his feet, they thanked, they blessed, and praised his Highness for not taking advantage against them for their sins, but rather had pity upon them in their misery, and returned to them with mercies, and to build up their Mansoul for ever. Thus was he had up straightway to the castle; for that was the royal palace, and the place where his honor was to dwell; which was ready prepared for his Highness, by the presence of the Lord Secretary, and the work of Captain Credence. So he entered in.

6. Then the people and commonalty of the town of Mansoul came to him into the castle to mourn, and to weep, and to lament, for their wickedness, by which they had forced him out of the town. So they, when they were come, bowed themselves to the ground seven times; they also wept, they wept aloud, and asked forgiveness of the Prince, and prayed that he would again, as of old, confirm his love to Mansoul.

To the which the great Prince replied, Weep not, but go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions to them for whom naught is prepared, for the joy of your Lord is your strength. I am returned to Mansoul with mercies, and my name shall be set up, exalted and magnified by it. He also took these inhabitants and kissed them, and laid them to his bosom.

Moreover, he gave to the elders of Mansoul, and to each town officer, a chain of gold, and a signet. He also sent to their wives ear-rings and jewels, and bracelets, and other things. He also bestowed upon the true born children of Mansoul, many precious things.

When Emmanuel the Prince had done all these things for the famous town of

Mansoul, then he said unto them, first, Wash your garments, then put on your ornaments, and then come to me into the castle of Mansoul. So they went to the fountain that was open for Judah and Jerusalem to wash in; and there they washed and there they made their garments white, and came again to the Prince into the castle, and thus they stood before him.

And now there was music and dancing throughout the whole town of Mansoul; and that because their Prince had again granted to them his presence, and the light of his countenance; the bells also did ring, and the sun shone comfortably upon them for a great while together.

The town of Mansoul did also now more thoroughly seek in the destruction and ruin of all remaining Diabolonians that abode in the walls, and the dens (that they had) in the town of Mansoul; for there was of them that had to this day escaped with life and limb from the hands of their oppressors in the famous town of Mansoul.

But the Lord Willbewill was a greater terror to them now than ever he had been before; forasmuch as his heart was yet more fully bent to seek, contrive, and pursue them to death; he pursued them night and day, and did put them now to sore distress, as will afterwards appear.

After things were thus far put into order in the famous town of Mansoul, care was taken and orders given by the blessed Prince Emmanuel, That the townsmen should, without further delay, appoint some to go forth into the plain to bury the dead that were there; the dead that fell by the sword of Emmanuel, and by the shield of the Captain Credence, lest the fumes and ill savors that would arise from them might infect the air, and so annoy the famous town of Mansoul. This also was a reason of this order, to wit: that as much as in Mansoul lay, they might cut off the name, and being, and remembrance of those enemies from the thought of the famous town of Mansoul and its inhabitants.

So order was given out by the Lord Mayor, that wise and trusty friend of the the town of Mansoul, that persons should be employed about this necessary business; and Mr. Godly-fear, and one Mr. Upright, were to be overseers about this matter; so persons were put under them to work in the fields, and to bury the slain that lay dead in the plains. And these were their places of employment, some were to make the graves, some to bury the dead, and some were to go to and fro in the plains, and also round about the borders of Mansoul, to see if a scull, or a bone, or a piece of a bone of a Doubter, was yet to be found above ground any where near the corporation: and if any were found, it was ordered that the searchers that searched should set up a mark thereby, and a sign, that those that were appointed to bury them might find it and bury it out of sight, that the name and remembrance of a Diabolonian Doubter might be blotted out from under heaven. And that the children, and they that were to be born in Mansoul, might not know (if possible) what a scull, what a bone, or a piece of a bone of a Doubter was.

So the buriers, and those that were appointed for that purpose, did as they were commanded; they buried the Doubters, and all the sculls and bones, and pieces of bones, of Doubters, wherever they found them, and so they cleansed the plains. Now also Mr. God's-peace took up his commission, and acted again as in former days.

Thus they buried in the plains about Mansoul, the Election-Doubters, the Vocation-doubters, the Grace-doubters, the Perseverance-doubters, the Resurrection-doubters, the Salvation-doubters and the Glory doubters, whose Captains were Captain Rage, Captain Cruel, Captain Damnation, Captain Insatiable, Captain Brimstone, Captain Torment, Captain No-ease, Captain Sepulchre, and Captain Past-hope: and old Incredulity was under Diabolus their general. There were also seven heads of their army, and they were the Lord Beelzebub, the Lord Lucifer, the Lord Legion, the Lord Apollyon, the Lord Python, the Lord Cerberus, and the Lord Belial. But the Princes and the captains, with old Incredulity their general, did all of them make their escape; so their men fell down slain by the power of the Prince's forces, and by the hands of the men of the town of Mansoul. They also were buried as before related, to the exceeding great joy of the now famous town of Mansoul. They that buried them, buried also with them their arms, which were cruel instruments of death, (their weapons were arrows, darts, mauls, firebrands, and the like;) they buried also their armor, their colors, banners, with the standard of Diabolus, and what else soever they could find, that did but smell of a Diabolonian Doubter.

Now, when the tyrant had arrived at Hell-gate-hill, with his old friend Incredulity, they immediately descended the den, and having there with their fellows for a while condoled their misfortune, and great loss that they sustained against the town of Mansoul, they fell at length into a passion, and revenged they would be for the loss that they sustained before the town of Mansoul; wherefore they presently call a council to contrive yet further what was to be done against the famous town of Mansoul, for their yawning paunches could not wait to see the result of their Lord Lu-

cifer's and their Lord Apollyon's counsel that they had given before, (for their raging gorge thought every day even as long as a short for-ever, until they were filled with the body and soul, with the flesh and bones, and with all the delicacies of Mansoul,) They therefore resolved to make another attempt upon the town of Mansoul, and that by an army mixed and made up, partly of Doubters, and partly of Bloodmen. A more particular account now take of both.

The Doubters are such as have their name from their nature, as well as from the land and kingdom where they are born; their nature is to put a question upon every one of the truths of Emmanuel, and their country is called, The land of Doubting; and that land lieth off, and furthest remote to the north, between the land of Darkness, and that called the Valley of the Shadow of Death. For though the land of Darkness, and that called the Valley of the Shadow of Death, be sometimes called as if they were one and the self-same place; yet indeed they are two, lying but a little way asunder, and the land of Doubting points in, and lieth between them. This is the land of Doubting, and these that came with Diabolus to ruin the town of Mansoul are the natives of that country.

The Bloodmen are a people that have their name derived from the malignity of their nature, and from the fury that is in them to execute it upon the town of Mansoul; their land lieth under the Dog-star and by that they are governed as to their intellectuals.

The name of their country is the Province of Loath-good, the remote parts of it are far distant from the land of Doubting, yet they do both butt and bound upon the hill called Hell-gate-hill. These people are always in league with the Doubters, for they jointly do make question of the faith and fidelity of the men of the town of Mansoul, and so are both alike qualified for the service of their prince.

Now of these two countries did Diabolus, by the beating of his drum, raise another army against the town of Mansoul, of five and twenty thousand strong. There were ten thousand Doubters, and fifteen thousand Bloodmen, and they were put under several captains for the war; and old Incredulity was again made general of the army.

As for the Doubters, their captains were five of the seven that were heads of the last Diabolonian army, and these are their names: Captain Beelzebub, Captain Lucifer, Captain Apollyon, Captain Legion, and Captain Cerberus; and the captains that they had before, were some of them made lieutenants and some of them ensigns of the army.

But Diabolus did not count that in this expedition of his, these Doubters would prove his principal men, for their manhood had been tried before, also the Mansoulians had put them to the worst, only he did bring them to multiply a number, and to help, if need was, at a pinch; but his trust he put in the bloodmen; for that they were all rugged villains, and he knew that they had done feats heretofore.

As for the bloodmen, they also were under command, and the names of their captains were Captain Cain, Captain Nimrod, Captain Ishmael, Captain Esau, Captain Saul, Captain Absalom, Captain Judas, and Captain Pope.

1. Captain Cain was over two bands, to wit: the zealous and the angry Blood-men; his standard-bearer bore the red colors, and his escutcheon was the murdering club.

2. Captain Nimrod was captain over two bands, to wit: the tyrannical and encroaching Blood-men; his standard-bearer bore the red colors, and his escutcheon was the great blood-hound.

3. Captain Ishmael was captain over two bands, to wit: the mocking and scornful Blood-men; his standard-bearer bore the red colors, and his escutcheon was one mocking at Abraham's Isaac.

4. Captain Esau was captain over two bands, to wit: the Blood-men that grudged that another should have the blessing; also over the Blood-men that are for executing their private revenge upon others; his standard-bearer bore the red colors, and his escutcheon was one privately lurking to murder Jacob.

5. Captain Saul was captain over two bands, to wit: the groundlessly jealous, and the devilishly furious Blood-men; his standard-bearer bore the red colors, and his escutcheon was three bloody darts cast at harmless David.

6. Captain Absalom was captain over two bands, to wit, over the Blood-men that will kill a father or a friend, for the glory of this world; also over those Blood-men that will hold one fair in hand with words, till they shall have pierced him with their swords; his standard-bearer bore the red colors, and his escutcheon was the son pursuing the father's blood.

7. Captain Judas was over two bands, to wit: the Blood-men that will sell a man's life for money, and those also that will betray a friend with their kiss; his standard-bearer bore the red colors, and his escutcheon was thirty pieces of silver, and the halter.

8. Captain Pope was captain over one band, for all these spirits are joined in one under him; his standard-bearer bore the red colors, and his escutcheon was the stake, the flame, and the good man in it.

Now, the reason why Diabolus did so soon rally another force after he had been beaten out of the field, was, for that he put mighty confidence in his army of Bloodmen, for he put a great deal more trust in them than he did before in his army of Doubters; though they had also often done great service for him in the strengthening of him in his kingdom; but these Bloodmen he had often proved, and their sword did seldom return empty. Besides, he knew that these, like mastiffs, would fasten upon any; upon father, mother, brother, sister, prince, or governor; yea, upon the Prince of princes. And that which encouraged him the more, was for that they did once force Emmanuel out of the kingdom of Universe; and why, thought he, may they not also drive him from the town of Mansoul?

So this army of five and twenty thousand strong, was by their general the great Lord Incredulity, led up against the town of Mansoul. Now Mr. Prywell, the scout master-general, did himself go out to spy, and he did bring Mansoul tidings of their coming. Wherefore they shut up their gates, and put themselves in a posture of defence against these new Diabolonians that came up against the town.

So Diabolus brought up his army, and beleaguered the town of Mansoul. The Doubters were placed about Feel-gate, and the Bloodmen set down before Eye-gate and Ear-gate.

Now when this army had thus encamped themselves, Incredulity in the name of Diabolus, his own name, and in the name of the Bloodmen, and the rest that were with him, sent a summons as hot as a red-hot iron to Mansoul to yield to their demands; threatening, that if they still stood it out against them, they would presently burn down Mansoul with fire. For you must know, that as for the Bloodmen, they were not so much that Mansoul should be surrendered, as that Mansoul should be destroyed and cut off out of the land of the living. True, they sent to them to surrender, but should they so do, that would not staunch or quench the thirsts of these men; they must have blood, the blood of Mansoul, else they die; and it is from hence that they have their name. Wherefore these Bloodmen he reserved, while now that they might, when all his engines proved ineffectual, as his sure and last card, he played against the town of Mansoul.

Now when the townsmen had received this red-hot summons, it begat in them at present some changing and interchanging of thoughts; but they jointly agreed in less than half an hour to carry the summons to the Prince; the which they did when they had writ at the bottom of it; "Lord save Mansoul from bloody men."

So he took it and looked upon it and considered it, and took notice also of that short petition that the men of Mansoul had written at the bottom of it, and called to him the noble Captain Credence, and bid him go, and take Captain Patience with him, and go and take care of that side of Mansoul that was beleaguered by the Bloodmen. So they went and did as they were commanded: the Captain Credence went and took Captain Patience, and they both secured that side of Mansoul that was besieged by the Bloodmen.

Then he commanded that Captain Goodhope and Captain Charity, and my Lord Willbewill, should take charge of the other side of the town; and I said the Prince, will set my standard upon the battlements of your castle, and do you three watch against the Doubters. This done, he again commanded, that the brave captain, the Captain Experience, should draw up his men in the market place; and that there he should exercise them day by day before the people of the town of Mansoul. Now this siege was long, and many a fierce attempt did the enemy, especially those called Bloodmen, make upon the town of Mansoul; and many a shrewd brush did some of the townsmen meet with from them, especially Captain Self-denial, who, I should have told you before, was commanded to take the care of Ear-gate and Eye-gate now, against the Bloodmen. This Captain Self-denial was a young man, but stout and a townsman in Mansoul, as Captain Experience also was. And Emmanuel at his second return to Mansoul, made him a captain over a thousand of the Mansoulians for the good of the corporation. This captain therefore being an hardy man, and a man of great courage, and willing to venture himself for the good of the town of Mansoul, would now and then sally out upon the Bloodmen, and give them many notable alarms, and entered several brisk skirmishes with them, and also did some execution upon them; but you must think that this could not easily be done, but he must meet with brushes himself; for he carried several of their marks in his face; yea, and some in some other parts of his body.

So after some time spent for the trial of the faith, and hope, and love of the town of Mansoul, the Prince Emmanuel upon a day calls his captains and men of war together, and divides them into two companies; this done, he commands them at a time appointed, and that in the morning very early, to sally out upon the enemy, saying, "Let half of you fall upon the Doubters, and half of you fall upon the Bloodmen. Those of you that go out against the Doubters, kill and slay, and cause to perish so many of them as by any means you can

lay hands on; but for you that go out against the Bloodmen, slay them not, but take them alive."

So at the time appointed, betimes in the morning, the captains went out as they were commanded against the enemies; Captain Goodhope, Captain Charity, and those that were joined with them, as Captain Innocent and Captain Experience, went out against the Doubters; and Captain Credence, and Captain Patience, with Captain Self-denial, and the rest that were to join with them, went out against the Bloodmen.

Now those that went out against the Doubters, drew up into a body before the plain, and marched on to bid them battle; but the Doubters remembering their last success, made a retreat, not daring to stand the shock, but fled from the Prince's men, wherefore they pursued them; and in their pursuit slew many, but they could not catch them all. Now those that escaped went, some of them, home, and the rest by fives, nines, and seventeens, like wanderers, went straggling up and down the country, where they, upon the barbarous people, showed and exercised many of their Diabolonian actions; nor did these people rise up in arms against them, but suffered themselves to be enslaved by them. They would also after this show themselves in companies before the town of Mansoul, but never to abide it; for if Captain Credence, Captain Good-hope, or Captain Experience, did but show themselves, they fled.

Those that went out against the Bloodmen, did as they were commanded, they forbore to slay any, but sought to compass them about. But the Bloodmen when they saw that no Emmanuel was in the field, concluded also that no Emmanuel was in Mansoul; wherefore they looking upon what the captains did, to be, as they call it, a fruit of the extravagancy of their wild and foolish fancies, rather despised them than feared them; but the captains minding their business, at last did compass them round, they also that had routed the Doubters came in amain to their aid; so, in fine, after some little struggling, for the Bloodmen also would have run for it, only now it was too late; (for though they are mischievous and cruel where they can overcome, yet all Bloodmen are chicken-hearted when they once come to see themselves matched and equalled,) so the captains took them and brought them to the Prince.

Now when they were taken, had before the Prince, and examined, he found them to be of three several counties, though they all came of one land.

1. One sort of them came out of Blindmanshire, and they were such as did ignorantly what they did.

2. Another sort of them came out of Blindzealshire, and they did superstitiously what they did.

3. The third sort of them came out of the town of Malice, in the county of Envy, and they did what they did out of spite and implacableness.

For the first of these, to wit: they that came out of Blindmanshire, when they saw where they were, and against whom they had fought, they trembled, and cried as they stood before him; and as many of these as asked him mercy, he touched their lips with his golden sceptre.

They that come out of Blindzealshire, they did not as their fellows did; for they pleaded that they had a right to do what they did, because Mansoul was a town whose laws and customs were diverse from all that dwelt thereabouts; very few of these could be brought to see their evil; but those that did, and asked mercy, they also obtained favor.

Now they that came out of the town of Malice, that is in the county of Envy, they neither wept, nor disputed, nor repented, but stood gnawing of their tongues before him for anguish and madness, because they could not have their will upon Mansoul. Now these last, with all those of the other two sorts, that did not unfeignedly ask pardon for their faults; those he made to enter into sufficient bond to answer for what they had done against Mansoul, and against her King, at the great and general assizes, to be holden for our Lord the King, where he himself should appoint, for the country and kingdom of Universe.

So they became bound each man for himself, to come in when called upon, to answer before our Lord the King, for what they had done as before.

And thus much concerning this second army that were sent by Diabolus to overthrow Mansoul.

But there were three of those that came from the land of Doubting, who after they had wandered and ranged the country awhile, and perceived that they had escaped, were so hardy as to thrust themselves, knowing that yet there were in the town some who took part with Diabolus—I say, they were so hardy as to thrust themselves into Mansoul. (Three, did I say? I think there were four.) Now to whose house should these Doubters go, but to the house of an old Diabolonian in Mansoul, whose name was Evil-Questioning; a very great enemy he was to Mansoul, and a great doer among Diabolonians there. Well, to this Evil-Questioning's house, as was said, did these Diabolonians come; (you may be sure that they had directions how to find the way thither;) so he made them welcome, pitied their misfortune, and succored

them with the best that he had in his house. Now after a little acquaintance, (and it was not long before they had that,) this old Evil-Questioning asked the Doubters if they were all of a town; he knew that they were all of one kingdom. And they answered, No, nor of one shire neither; for I, said one, am an Election-doubter; I, said another, am a Vocation-doubter; then said the third, I am a Salvation-doubter; and the fourth said he was a Grace-doubter. Well, quoth the old gentleman, be of what shire you will, I am persuaded that you are down, boys; you have the very length of my foot, are one with my heart, and shall be welcome to me. So they thanked him, and were glad that they had found themselves an harbor in Mansoul. Then said Evil-Questioning to them, How many of your company might there be that came with you to the siege of Mansoul? And they answered, There were but ten thousand Doubters in all, for the rest of the army consisted of fifteen thousand Bloodmen. These Bloodmen, quoth they, border upon our country, but, poor men, as we hear, they were every one taken by Emmanuel's forces. Ten thousand! quoth the old gentleman, I'll promise you that is a round company. But how came it to pass, since you were so mighty a number, that you fainted, and durst not fight your foes? Our general, said they, was the first man that did run for it. Pray, quoth their landlord, who was that your cowardly general? He was once the Lord-Mayor of Mansoul, said they. But pray call him not a cowardly general, for whether any from the east to the west had done more service for our Prince Diabolus, than has my Lord Incredulity, will be a hard question for you to answer. But had they catched him, they would for certain have hanged him, and we promise you hanging is but a bad business. Then said the old gentleman, I would that all the ten thousand Doubters were now well armed in Mansoul, and myself at the head of them, I would see what I could do. Ay, said they, that would be well if we could see that; but wishes, alas! what are they? and these words were spoken aloud. Well, said old Evil-Questioning, take heed that you talk not too loud, you must be squat and close, and must take care of yourselves while you are here, or I'll assure you, you will be snapped.

Why? quoth the Doubters.

Why, quoth the old gentleman! why, because both the Prince and Lord Secretary, and their captains and soldiers, are all at present in town; yea, the town is as full of them as ever it can hold. And besides, there is one whose name is Willbewill, a most cruel enemy of ours, and him the Prince has made keeper of the gates, and has commanded him, that with all the diligence he can, he should look for, search out, and destroy all, and all manner of Diabolonians. And if he lighted upon you, down you go, though your heads were made of gold.

And now to see how it happened; one of the Lord Willbewill's faithful soldiers, whose name was Mr. Diligence, stood all this while, listening under old Evil-Questioning's eaves, and heard all the talk that had been betwixt him and the Doubters that he entertained under his roof.

The soldier was a man that my Lord had much confidence in, and that he loved dearly, and that both because he was a man of courage, and also a man that was unwearied in seeking after Diabolonians to apprehend them.

Now this man, as I told you, heard all the talk that was between old Evil-Questioning and these Diabolonians; wherefore what does he but goes to his Lord, and tells him what he had heard. And sayest thou so, my trusty? quoth my Lord. Ay, quoth Diligence, that I do, and if your Lordship will be pleased to go with me, you shall find it as I have said. And are they there? quoth my Lord: I know Evil-Questioning well, for he and I were great in the time of our apostacy. But I know not now where he dwells. But I do, said this man; and if your Lordship will go, I will lead you the way to his den. Go, quoth my Lord, that I will. Come my Diligence, let us go find them out. So my Lord and his man went together the direct way to his house. Now his man went before to show him his way, and they went till they came even under old Mr. Evil-Questioning's wall. Then said Diligence, Hark! my Lord, do you know the old gentleman's tongue when you hear it? Yes, said my Lord, I know it well, but I have not seen him many a day. This I know, he is cunning; I wish he doth not give us the slip. Let me alone for that, said his servant Diligence. But how shall we find the door? quoth my Lord. Let me alone for that too, said his man. So he had my Lord Willbewill about, and showed him the way to the door. Then my Lord, without more ado, broke open the door, rushed into the house, and caught them all five together, even as Diligence, his man, had told him. So my Lord apprehended them, and led them away, and committed them to the hand of Mr. Trueman the goaler, and commanded, and he did put them in ward. This done, my Lord-Mayor was acquainted in the morning with what my Lord Willbewill had done over night, and his Lordship rejoiced much at the news, not only because there were Doubters apprehended, but because that old Evil-Questioning was taken; for

he had been a very great trouble to Mansoul, and much affliction to my Lord-Mayor himself. He had also been sought for often, but no hand could ever be laid upon him till now.

Well, the next thing was to make preparation to try these five that by my Lord had been apprehended, and that were in the hands of Mr. True-man the gaoler. So the day was set, and the court called and come together, and being seated, the prisoners were brought to the bar. My Lord Willbewill had power to have slain them when at first he took them, and that without any more ado, but he thought it at this time more for the honor of the Prince, the comfort of Mansoul, and the discouragement of the enemy, to bring them forth to public judgment.

But, I say, Mr. True-man brought them in chains to the bar, to the town-hall, for that was the place of judgment. So to be short, the jury was pannelled, the witnesses sworn, and the prisoners tried for their lives; the jury was the same that tried Mr. No-truth, Pitiless, Haughty, and the rest of their companions.

And first, old Questioning himself was set to the bar; for he was the receiver, the entertainer and comforter of these Doubters, that by nation were outlandish men; then he was bid to hearken to his charge, and was told that he had liberty to object, if he had ought to say for himself. So his indictment was read; the manner and form here follows:

Mr. Questioning, Thou art here indicted by the name of Evilquestioning, an intruder upon the town of Mansoul, for that thou art a Diabolonian by nature, and also a hater of the Prince Emmanuel, and one that hast studied the ruin of the town of Mansoul. Thou art also here indicted for countenancing the King's enemies, after wholesome laws made to the contrary: For, 1. Thou hast questioned the truth of her doctrine and state; 2. In wishing that ten thousand Doubters were in her; 3. In receiving, in entertaining, and encouraging of her enemies, that came from their army unto thee. What sayest thou to this indictment; art thou guilty, or not guilty?

My Lord, quoth he, I know not the meaning of this indictment, forasmuch as I am not the man concerned in it; the man that standeth by this charge, accused before this bench, is called by the name of Evil-questioning, which name I deny to be mine, mine being Honest-inquiring. The one indeed sounds like the other; but I trow your Lordship knows, that between these two there is a wide difference; for I hope that a man, even in the worst of times, and that to amongst the worst of men, may make an honest inquiry after things without running the danger of death.

Will. Then spake my Lord Willbewill, for he was one of the witnesses: My Lord, and you the honorable bench, and magistrates of the town of Mansoul, you all have heard with your ears, that the prisoner at the bar has denied his name, and so thinks to shift from the charge of the indictment But I know him to be the man concerned, and that his proper name is Evil-questioning. I have known him my Lord above this thirty years; for he and I (a shame it is for me to speak it) were great acquaintance, when Diabolus that tyrant, had the government of Mansoul; and I testify that he is a Diabolonian by nature, an enemy to our Prince, and hater of the blessed town of Mansoul. He has in times of rebellion, been at and lain in my house, my Lord, not so little as twenty nights together; and we did use to talk then (for the substance of talk) as he, and his Doubters have talked of late; true I have not seen him many a day. I suppose that the coming of Emmanuel to Mansoul, has made him to change his lodgings, as this indictment has driven him to change his name; but this is the man, my Lord.

Then said the court unto him, hast thou any more to say?

Evil. Yes, quoth the old gentleman, that I have; for all that as yet has been said against me, is but by the mouth of one witness, and it is not lawful for the famous town of Mansoul, at the mouth of one witness, to put any man to death.

Dilig. Then stood forth Mr. Diligence, and said, My Lord, as I was upon my watch such a night, at the head of Badstreet in this town, I chanced to hear a muttering within this gentleman's house; then thought I, what is to do here? So I went up close, but very softly to the side of the house to listen, thinking as indeed it fell out, that there I might light upon some Diabolonian conventicle. So, as I said, I drew nearer and nearer, and when I was got up close to the wall, it was but a while before I perceived that there were outlandish men in the house; but I did well understand their speech, for I have been a traveler myself. Now hearing such language, in such a tottering cottage as this old gentleman dwelt in, I clapt mine ear to a hole in the window, and there heard them talk as followeth: This old Mr. Questioning asked these Doubters what they were, whence they came, and what was their business in these parts? And they told him to all these questions, yet he did entertain them. He also asked what numbers there were of them; and they told him ten thousand men. He then asked them why they made no more manly assault upon Man-

soul; and they told him: so he called their general a coward for marching off when he should have fought for his prince. Further, this old Evil-questioning wished, and I heard him wish, Would all the ten thousand Doubters were now in Mansoul, and himself at the head of them. He bid them also to take heed and lie quiet, for if they were taken they must die, although they had heads of gold.

Then said the court, Mr. Evil-questioning, here is now another witness against you, and his testimony is full: 1. He swears that you did receive these men into your house, and that you did nourish them there, though you knew that they were Diabolonians, and the kings enemies. 2. He swears that you did wish ten thousand of them in Mansoul. 3. He swears that you did give them advice to be quiet and close lest they were taken by the Kings servants. All which manifesteth that thou art a Diabolonian; for hadst thou been a friend to the King, thou wouldst have apprehended them.

Evil. Then said Evil-questioning, To the first of these I answer, the men that came into mine house were strangers, and I took them in, and is it now become a crime in Mansoul for a man to entertain strangers? That I did also nourish them is true, and why should my charity be blamed? As for the reason why I wished ten thousand of them in Mansoul, I never told it to the witnesses, nor to themselves. I might wish them to be taken, and so my wish might mean well to Mansoul, for aught that any yet knows. I did also bid them take heed that they fell not into the captain's hands; but that might be because I am unwilling that any man should be slain, and not because I would have the King's enemies, as such, escape.

My Lord-Mayor then replied, That though it was a virtue to entertain stranger's, yet it was treason to entertain the King's enemies. And for what else thou hast said, thou dost by words but labor to evade, and defer the execution of judgment. But could there be no more proved against thee, but that thou art a Diabolonian, thou must for that die the death by the law; but to be a receiver, a nourisher, a countenancer, and a harborer of others of them, yea, of outlandish Diabolonians; yea, of far, on purpose to cut off and destroy our Mansoul; this must not be borne.

Then said Evil-Questioning, I see how the game will go; I must die for my name, and for my charity. And so he held his peace.

Then they called the outlandish Doubters to the bar; and the first of them that was arraigned, was the Election-doubter; so his indictment was read; and because he was an outlandish man, the substance of it was told him by an interpreter; to wit: That he was there charged with being an enemy of Emmanuel the Prince, a hater of the town of Mansoul, and an opposer of her most wholesome doctrine.

Then the judge asked him if he would plead? But he said only this, That he confessed that he was an Election-doubter; and that was the religion that he had ever been brought up in. And said, moreover, if I must die for my religion, I trow I shall die a martyr, and so I care the less.

Judge. Then it was replied, To question election is to overthrow a great doctrine of the Gospel; to wit: the omniscience, and power, and will of God; to take away the liberty of God with his creature; to stumble the faith of the town of Mansoul; and to make salvation to depend upon works, and not upon grace. It also belied the word, and disquieted the minds of the men of Mansoul; therefore, by the best of laws, he must die.

Then was the Vocation-doubter called, and set to the bar; and his indictment for substance was the same with the other, only he was particularly charged with denying the calling of Mansoul.

The Judge asked him also, what he had to say for himself?

So he replied, That he never believed, that there was any such thing as a distinct and powerful call of God to Mansoul, otherwise than by the general voice of the word; nor by that neither, otherwise than as it exhorted them to forbear evil, and to do that which is good; and in so doing a promise of happiness is annexed.

Then said the Judge, thou art a Diabolonian, and hast denied a great part of one of the most experimental truths of the Prince of the town of Mansoul; for he has called, and she has heard a most distinct and powerful call of her Emmanuel, by which she has been quickened, awakened, and possessed with heavenly grace to desire to have communion with her Prince, to serve him, and do his will, and to look for her happiness merely of his good pleasure. And for thine abhorrence of this good doctrine, thou must die the death.

Then the Grace-doubter was called, and his indictment read; and he replied thereto, That though he was of the land of Doubting, his father was the offspring of a Pharisee, and lived in good fashion among his neighbors; and that he taught him to believe, and believe it he did, and would, that Mansoul, shall never be saved freely by grace.

Then said the Judge, Why, the law of the Prince is plain; 1. Negatively, Not of works. 2. Positively, By grace you are saved. And thy religion settleth in and

upon the works of the flesh; for the works of the law are the works of the flesh. Besides, in saying as thou hast done, thou hast robbed God of his glory, and given it to a sinful man; thou hast robbed Christ of the necessity of his undertaking, and the sufficiency thereof, and hast given both these to the works of the flesh. Thou hast despised the work of the Holy Ghost, and hast magnified the will of the flesh, and of the legal mind. Thou art a Diabolonian, the son of a Diabolonian; and for thy Diabolonian principles, thou must die.

The court then having proceeded thus far with them, sent out the jury, who forthwith brought them in guilty of death. Then stood up the Recorder, and addressed himself to the prisoners: You, the prisoners at the bar, you have been here indicted and proved guilty of high crimes against Emmanuel our Prince, and against the welfare of the famous town of Mansoul; crimes for which you must be put to death; and die ye accordingly.

So they were sentenced to the death of the cross. The place assigned them for execution was that where Diabolus drew up his last army against Mansoul; save only that old Evil-questioning was hanged at the top of Bad-street, just over against his own door.

When the town of Mansoul had thus far rid themselves of their enemies, and of the troublers of their peace; in the next place, a strict commandment was given out, that yet my Lord Willbewill should, with Diligence his man, search for, and do his best to apprehend what Diabolonians were yet left alive in Mansoul. The names of several of them were Mr. Fooling, Mr. Let-good-slip, Mr. Slavish-fear, Mr. No-love, Mr. Mistrust, Mr. Flesh, and Mr. Sloth. It was also commanded, that he should apprehend Mr. Evil-questioning's children that he left behind him; and that they should demolish his house. The children that he left behind were these: Mr. Doubt, and he was his eldest son: the next to him was Legal-life, Unbelief, Wrong-thoughts-of-Christ, Clip-promise, Carnal-sense, Live-by-feeling, Self-love. All these he had by one wife, and her name was No-hope; she was the kinswoman of old Incredulity, for he was her uncle, and when her father old Dark was dead, he took her and brought her up, and when she was marriageable, he gave her to this old Evil-questioning to wife.

Now the Lord Willbewill did put into execution his commission, with great Diligence his man. He took Fooling in the streets, and hanged him up in want-wit-alley, over against his own house. This Fooling was he that would have had the town of Mansoul deliver up Captain Credence into the hands of Diabolus, provided that then he would have withdrawn his force out of the town. He also took Mr. Let-good-slip one day as he was busy in the market, and executed him according to law. Now there was an honest, poor man in Mansoul, and name was Mr. Meditation, one of no great account in the days of apostacy, but now of repute with the best of the town. This man therefore they were willing to prefer; now Mr. Let-good-slip had a great deal of wealth heretofore in Mansoul, and at Emmanuel's coming it was sequestered to the use of the Prince; this therefore was now given to Mr. Meditation, to improve for the common good; and after him to his son Mr. Think-well; this Think-well he had by Mrs. Piety his wife, and she was the daughter of Mr. Recorder.

After this my Lord apprehended Clip-promise; now because he was a notorious villain, for by his doings, much of the King's coin was abused; therefore he was made a public example. He was arraigned and judged to be first set in the pillory, then to be whipped by all the children and servants in Mansoul, and then to be hanged till he was dead.

He also apprehended Carnal-sense, and put him in hold, but how it came about I cannot tell, but he brake prison and made his escape. Yea, and the bold villain will not yet quit the town, but lurks in the Diabolonian dens a-days, and haunts like a ghost honest men's houses at nights. Wherefore there was a proclamation set up in the market-place in Mansoul, signifying, that whosoever could discover Carnal-sense, and apprehend him and slay him, should be admitted daily to the Prince's table, and should be made keeper of the treasure of Mansoul. Many therefore did bend themselves to do this thing, but take him and slay him they could not, though often he was discovered.

But my Lord took Mr. Wrong-thoughts-of-Christ, and put him into prison, and he died there, though it was long first, for he died of a lingering consumption.

Self-love was also taken and committed to custody, but there were many that were allied to him in Mansoul, so his judgment was deferred; but at last Mr. Self-denial stood up and said, if such villains as these may be winked at in Mansoul, I will lay down my commission. He also took him from the crowd, and had him among his soldiers, and there he was brained. But some in Mansoul muttered at it, though none durst speak plainly, because Emmanuel was in town. But this brave act of Captain Self-denial came to the Prince's ears, so he sent for him, and made him a Lord in Mansoul.

Then my Lord Self-denial took courage,

and set to the pursuing the Diabolonians with my Lord Willbewill; and they took Live-by-feeling, and they took Legal-life, and put them in hold till they died. But Mr. Unbelief was a nimble jack, him they could never lay hold of, though they attempted to do it often. He therefore and some few more of the Diabolonian tribe, did yet remain in Mansoul, to the time that Mansoul left off to dwell any longer in the kingdom of Universe. But they kept them to their dens and holes; if one of them did appear, or happen to be seen in any of the streets of the town of Mansoul, the whole town would be up in arms after them, yea, the very children in Mansoul would cry out after them as after a thief, and would wish that they might stone them to death with stones. And now did Mansoul arrive to some good degree of peace and quiet; her Prince also did abide within her borders, her captains also, and her soldiers did their duties, and Mansoul minded her trade that she had with the country that was afar off; also she was busy in her manufacture.

When the town of Mansoul had thus far rid themselves of so many of their enemies, and the troublers of their peace, the Prince sent to them, and appointed a day wherein he would at the market place meet the whole people, and there give them in charge concerning some further safety and comfort, and to the condemnation and destruction of their home-bred Diabolonians. So the day appointed was come, and the townsmen met together; Emmanuel also came down in his chariot, and all his captains in their state attending of him on the right hand and on the left. Then was an O ye! made for silence; and after some mutual carriages of love, the Prince began, and thus proceeded.

You my Mansoul, and the beloved of mine heart, many and great are the privileges that I have bestowed upon you; I have singled you out from others and have chosen you to myself, not for your worthiness but for mine own sake. I have also redeemed you, not only from the dread of my Father's law but from the hand of Diabolus. This I have done because I have loved you, and because I have set my heart upon you to do you good. I have also, that all things that might hinder thy way to the pleasures of paradise might be taken out of the way, laid down for thee, for thy soul, a plenary satisfaction, and have bought thee to myself; a price not of corruptible things as of silver and gold, but a price of blood, mine own blood, which I have freely spilt upon the ground to make thee mine. So I have reconciled thee, O my Mansoul! to my Father, and interested thee in the mansion-houses that are with my Father in the royal-city, where things are O my Mansoul! that eye hath not seen, nor hath entered into the heart of man to conceive.

Besides, O my Mansoul, thou seest what I have done! and how I have taken thee out of the hands of thine enemies, unto whom thou hast deeply revolted from my Father, and by whom thou wast content to be possessed and also to be destroyed. I came to thee first by my law, and then by my Gospel, to awaken thee, and show thee my glory. And thou knowest what thou wast, what thou saidest, what thou didst, and how many times thou rebelledst against my Father and me: yet I left thee not, as thou seest this day; but I came to thee, have borne thy manners, have waited upon thee, and after all accepted of thee, even of my mere grace and favor; and would not suffer thee to be lost, as thou most willingly wouldst have been.

Thou seest, moreover, my Mansoul, how I have passed by thy backslidings, and have healed thee. Indeed I was angry with thee, but I have turned mine anger away from thee, because I loved thee still, and mine anger and mine indignation is ceased in the destruction of thine enemies, O Mansoul! Nor did thy goodness fetch me again unto thee after that I for thy transgression have hid my face, and withdrawn my presence from thee. The way of backsliding was thine, but the way and means of thy recovery was mine. I invented the means of thy return. It was I that made an hedge and a wall, when thou wast beginning to turn to things in which I delighted not. It was I that made thy sweet bitter, thy day night, thy smooth way thorny; and that also confounded all that sought thy destruction. It was I that set Mr. Godly-fear to work in Mansoul. It was I that stirred up thy conscience and understanding, thy will and thy affections, after thy great and woful decay. It was I that put life into thee, O Mansoul! to seek me that thou mightest find me, and in thy finding, find thine own health, and happiness, and salvation. It was I that fetched the second time the Diabolonians out of Mansoul; and it was I that overcame them, and that destroyed them before thy face.

And now, my Mansoul, I am returned to thee in peace, and thy transgressions against me are as if they had not been. Nor shall it be with thee as in former days, but I will do better for thee than at thy beginning. For yet a little while, O my Mansoul! even after a few more times are gone over thy head, I will (but be not troubled at what I say) take down this famous town of Mansoul, stick and stone to the ground; and I will carry the stones thereof and the timber thereof, and the walls thereof, and the dust thereof, and the inhabitants thereof, into mine own country, even into a

kingdom of my Father; and will there set it up in such strength and glory, as it never did see in the kingdom where now it is placed. I will even there set it up for my Father's habitation; for, for that purpose it was at first erected in the kingdom of Universe and there will I make it a spectacle of wonder, a monument of mercy, and the admirer of its own mercy. There shall the natives of Mansoul see all that of which they have seen nothing here; there shall they be equal to those unto whom they have been inferior here. And there thou shalt, O my Mansoul! have such communion with me, with my Father, and with your Lord Secretary, as is not possible here to be enjoyed; nor ever could be shouldst thou live in Universe the space of a thousand years.

And there, O my Mansoul! thou shall be afraid of murderers no more; of Diabolonians and their threats no more. There shall be no more plots, nor contrivances, nor designs, against thee, O my Mansoul! There thou shalt no more hear the evil tidings, or the noise of the Diabolonian drum. There thou shalt not see the Diabolonian standard-bearers, nor yet behold Diabolus' standard. No Diabolonian mount shall be cast up against thee there, nor shall there the Diabolonian standard be set up to make thee afraid. There thou shalt not need captains, engines, soldiers and men of war. There thou shalt meet with no sorrow nor grief, nor shall it be possible that any Diabolonian should again, for ever, be able to creep into thy skirts, burrow in thy walls, or be seen again within thy borders, all the days of eternity. Life shall there last longer than here you are able to desire it should, and yet it shall always be sweet and new, nor shall any impediment attend it forever.

There, O Mansoul! thou shalt meet with many of those that have been like thee, and that have been partakers of thy sorrows; even such as I have chosen, and redeemed, and set apart, as thou, for my Father's court and city royal. All they will be glad in thee, and thou, when thou seest them, shalt be glad in thine heart.

There are things, O Mansoul! even things of thy Father's providing and mine, that never were seen since the beginning of the world, and they are laid up with my Father, and sealed up among his treasures for thee, till thou shalt come thither to enjoy them.

And thus, O my Mansoul! I have showed unto thee what shall be done to thee hereafter, if thou canst hear, if thou canst understand; and now I will tell thee what at present must be my duty and practice, until I come and fetch thee to myself, according as is related in the Scriptures of truth.

First, I charge thee that thou dost hereafter keep more white and clean the liveries which I gave thee before my last withdrawing from thee.

When your garments are white, the world will count you mine. Also when your garments are white, then I am delighted in your ways; for then your goings to and fro will be like a flash of lightning, that those that are present must take notice of, also their eyes will be made to dazzle thereat. Deck thyself, therefore, according to my bidding, and make thyself by my law straight steps for thy feet, so shall thy King greatly desire thy beauty, for he is thy Lord, and worship thou him.

Now that thou mayest keep them as I bid thee, I have, as I before told thee, provided for thee an open fountain to wash thy garments in. Look therefore that thou wash often in my fountain, and go not in defiled garments; for as it is to my dishonour and my disgrace, so it will be to thy discomfort, when you shall walk in filthy garments. Keep thy garments always white, and let thy head lack no ointment.

My Mansoul, I have oft-times delivered thee from the designs, plots, attempts, and conspiracies of Diabolus, and for all this I ask thee nothing, but that thou render not to me evil for my good, but that thou bear in mind my love and the continuation of my kindness to my beloved Mansoul, so as to provoke thee to walk, in thy measure, according to the benefits bestowed on thee. Of old the sacrifices were bound with cords to the horns of the golden altar. Consider what is said to thee, O my blessed Mansoul!

O my Mansoul! I have lived, I have died, I live, and will die no more, for thee. I live that thou mayest not die. Because I live thou shalt live also. I reconciled thee to my Father by the blood of my cross, and being reconciled, thou shalt live through me. I will pray for thee, I will fight for thee, I will yet do thee good.

Nothing can hurt thee but sin; nothing can grieve me but sin; nothing can make thee base before thy foes but sin; take heed of sin, my Mansoul.

And dost thou know why I at first, and do still suffer Diabolonians to dwell in thy walls, O Mansoul? It is to keep thee wakening, to try thy love, to make thee watchful, and to cause thee yet to prize my noble captains, their soldiers, and my mercy.

It is also that yet thou mayest be made to remember what a deplorable condition thou once wast in. I mean when not some, but all, did dwell, not in thy walls, but in thy castle, and in thy strong hold, O Mansoul!

O my Mansoul! should I slay all them within, many there be without that would bring thee into bondage; for were all those

within cut off, those without would find thee sleeping, and then as in a moment, they would swallow up my Mansoul. I therefore let them live in thee, not to do thee hurt, (the which they yet will, if thou hearken to them and serve them,) but to do thee good, the which they must, if thou watch and fight against them. Know therefore, that whatever they shall tempt thee to, my design is, that they should drive thee, not further off, but nearer to my Father, to learn thee war, to make petitioning desirable to thee, and to make thee little in thine own eyes, hearken dilligently to this, my Mansoul.

Shew me then thy love, my Mansoul, and let not those that are within thy walls take thy affections off from him that hath redeemed thy soul. Yea, let the sight of a Diabolonian heighten thy love to me. I came once, and twice, and thrice, to save thee from the poison of those arrows that would have wrought thy death. Stand for me, my friend, my Mansoul, against the Diabolonians, and I will stand for thee before my Father and all his court. Love me against temptation, and I will love thee notwithstanding thine infirmities.

O my Mansoul! remember what my captains, my soldiers, and mine engines, have borne for thee; they have fought for thee, they have suffered by thee, they have borne much at thy hands to do thee good. Hadst thou not had them to help thee, Diabolus had certainly made a hand of thee. Nourish them therefore, my Mansoul. When thou dost well, they will be well; when thou dost ill, they will be ill, and sick and weak. Make not my captains sick, O Mansoul! for if they be sick, thou canst not be well; if they be weak thou canst not be strong; if they be faint, thou canst not be stout and valiant for thy King, O Mansoul! Nor must thou think always to live by sense; thou must live upon my word. Thou must believe, O my Mansoul! when I am from thee, that yet I love thee and bear thee upon mine heart for ever.

Remember, therefore, O my Mansoul! that thou art beloved of me. As I have therefore taught thee to watch, to fight, to pray, and to make war against my foes, so now I command thee to believe, that my love is constant to thee. O my Mansoul! how have I set my heart, my love upon thee! Watch. Behold, I lay none other burden upon thee than what thou hast already. Hold fast till I come.

THE END.

PROPERTY OF PRINCETON REC. APR 1881

FOSTER'S ESSAY ON DECISION.

Essays, in a Series of Letters, on the following Subjects:—On a Man's writing Memoirs of Himself; On Decision of Character; On the Application of the Epithet Romantic; On some of the Causes by which Evangelical Religion has been rendered less acceptable to Persons of cultivated Taste. By JOHN FOSTER. 2 vols. 12mo. 1805. 1 vol. 8vo. pp. 458. Seventh Edition, 1823.

THE authors who have written on human nature may be properly distinguished into two classes, the metaphysical and the popular; the former contemplate man in the abstract; and, neglecting the different shades of character and peculiarities of temper by which mankind are diversified, confine their attention to those fundamental principles which pervade the whole species. In attempting to explore the secrets of mental organization, they assume nothing more for a basis than mere susceptibility of impression, whence they labor to deduce the multiplied powers of the human mind. The light in which they choose to consider man in their researches is not that of a being possessed already of the exercise of reason and agitated by various sentiments and passions, but simply as capable of acquiring them; and their object is, by an accurate investigation of the laws which regulate the connexion of the mind with the external universe, to discover in what manner they are actually acquired. They endeavor to trace back every mental appearance to its source. Considering the powers and principles of the mind as a complicated piece of machinery, they attempt to discover the *primum mobile*, or in other words, that primary law, that ultimate fact which is sufficiently comprehensive to account for every other movement. This attention to the internal operations of the mind, with a view to analyze its principles, is one of the distinctions of modern

times. Among the ancients scarcely any thing of this sort was known. Comprehensive theories and subtile disquisitions are not unfrequent in their writings; but they are chiefly employed for the illustration of different modes of virtue and the establishment of different ideas of the supreme good. Their most abstracted speculations had almost always a practical tendency. The schoolmen, indeed, were deeply immersed in metaphysical speculations. They fatigued their readers in the pursuit of endless abstractions and distinctions; but the design, even of these writers, seems rather to have been accurately to arrange and define the objects of thought than to explore the mental faculties themselves. The nature of particular and universal ideas, time, space, infinity, together with the mode of existence to be ascribed to the Supreme Being, chiefly engaged the attention of the mightiest minds in the middle ages. Acute in the highest degree, and endued with a wonderful patience of thinking, they yet, by a mistaken direction of their powers, wasted themselves in endless logomachies, and displayed more of a teasing subtlety than of philosophical depth. They chose rather to strike into the dark and intricate by-paths of metaphysical science than to pursue a career of useful discovery: and as their disquisitions were neither adorned by taste nor reared on a basis of extensive knowledge, they gradually fell into neglect when juster views in philosophy made their appearance. Still they will remain a mighty monument of the utmost which the mind of man can accomplish in the field of abstraction. If the metaphysician does not find in the schoolmen the materials of his work, he will perceive the study of their writings to be of excellent benefit in sharpening his tools. They will aid his acuteness, though they may fail to enlarge his knowledge.

When the inductive and experimental philosophy recommended by Bacon had, in the hands of Boyle and Newton, led to such brilliant discoveries in the investigation of matter, an attempt was soon made to transfer the same method of proceeding to the mind. Hobbes, a man justly infamous for his impiety, but of extraordinary penetration, first set the example; which was not long after followed by Locke, who was more indebted to his predecessor than he had the candor to acknowledge. His celebrated Essay has been generally considered as the established code of metaphysics. The opinions and discoveries of this great man have since been enriched by large accessions, and, on some points corrected and amended by the labors of Berkley, Hume, Reid, and a multitude of other writers. Still there seems to be a principle of mortality inherent in metaphysical science, which sooner or later impairs the reputation of its most distinguished adepts. It is a circumstance worthy of remark, that there has never been a reputation of this kind which has continued with undiminished lustre through the revolutions of a century. The fame of Locke is visibly on the decline; the speculations of Malebranche are scarcely heard of in France; and Kant, the greatest metaphysical name on the continent, sways a doubtful sceptre amid a host of opponents. It is not our intention to inquire at large into the reason of the transitory fame acquired by this class of writers. Whether it be that the science itself rests on a precarious foundation; that its discoveries can never be brought to a decisive test; that it is too remote from the business of life to be generally interesting; that it does not compensate by its use for its defects in the fascinations of pleasure; and that it is not, like the intricacies of law, interwoven with the institutions of society: the fact itself is unquestionable. He who aspires to a reputation that shall survive the vicissitudes of opinion and of time, must think of some other character than that of a metaphysician.

Grand and imposing in its appearance, it seems to lay claim to universal empire, and to supply the measures and the criteria of all other knowledge; but it resembles in its progress the conquests of a Sesostris and a Bacchus, who overran kingdoms and provinces with ease, but made no permanent settlements, and soon left no trace of their achievements.

The case is very different with the popular writers, who, without attempting to form a theory or to trace their first elements, the vast assemblage of passions and principles which enter into the composition of man, are satisfied with describing him as he is. These writers exhibit characters, paint manners, and display human nature in those natural and affecting lights under which it will always appear to the eye of an acute and feeling observer. Without staying to inquire why it is that men think, feel, reason, remember,—are attracted by some objects or repelled by others,—they take them as they are, and delineate the infinitely various modifications and appearances assumed by our essential nature. From the general mass of human passions and manners they detach such portions as they suppose will admit of the most beautiful illustrations, or afford the most instructive lessons. Next to a habit of self-reflection, accompanied with an attentive survey of real life, writers of this kind are the best guides in the acquisition of that most important branch of knowledge, an acquaintance with mankind. As they profess to consider human nature

under some particular aspect, their views are necessarily more limited than those of metaphysical writers; but if they are less extensive, they are more certain; if they occupy less ground, they cultivate it better. In the language of Bacon, "they come home to men's business and bosom." As they aim at the delineation of living nature, they can never deviate far from truth and reality without becoming ridiculous; while for the fidelity of their representations they appeal to the common sense of mankind, the dictates of which they do little more than imbody and adorn. The system of Locke or of Hartley, it is possible to conceive, may be exploded by the prevalence of a different theory; but it is absurd to suppose that the remarks on life and manners contained in the writings of Addison or of Johnson can ever be discredited by a future moralist. In the formation of a theory; more especially in matters so subtile and complicated as those which relate to the mind, the sources of error are various. When a chain of reasoning consists of many links, a failure of connexion in any part will produce a mass of error in the result, proportioned to the length to which it is extended. In a complicated combination, if the numeration of particulars in the outset is not complete, the mistake is progressive and incurable. In the ideal philosophy of Locke, for example, if the sources of sensation are not sufficiently explored, or if there be, as some of the profoundest thinkers have suspected, other sources of ideas than those of sensation, the greater part of his system falls to the ground. The popular writers of whom we have been speaking are not exposed to such dangers. It is possible, indeed, that many particular views may be erroneous; but as their attention is continually turned to living nature, provided they be possessed of competent talents, their general delineations cannot fail of being distinguished by fidelity and truth. While a few speculative men amuse themselves with discussing the comparative merits of different metaphysical systems, these are the writers whose sentiments, conveyed through innumerable channels, form the spirit of the age; nor is it to be doubted that the Spectator and the Rambler have imparted a stronger impulse to the public mind than all the metaphysical systems in the world. On this account we are highly gratified when we meet with a writer who, to a vein of profound and original thought, together with just views of religion and of morals, joins the talent of recommending his ideas by the graces of imagination and the powers of eloquence. Such a writer we have the happiness of reviewing at present. Mr. Foster's name is probably new to most of our readers; but if we may judge from the production before us, he cannot long be concealed from the notice and applause of the literary world. In an age of mediocrity, when the writing of books has become almost a mechanical art, and a familiar acquaintance with the best models has diffused taste and diminished genius, it is impossible to peruse an author who displays so great original powers without a degree of surprise. We are ready to inquire by what peculiar felicity he was enabled to desert the trammels of custom, to break the spell by which others feel themselves bound, and to maintain a career so perfectly uncontrolled and independent. A cast of thought original and sublime, an unlimited command of imagery, a style varied, vigorous, and bold, are some of the distinguishing features of these very singular essays. We add with peculiar satisfaction, that they breathe the spirit of piety and benevolence, and bear the most evident indications of a heart deeply attached to scriptural truths. Though Mr. F. has thought fit to give to his work the title of "Essays, in a Series of *Letters*," the reader must not expect any thing in the epistolary style. They were written, the author informs us, in letters to a friend, but with a view to publication; and in their distinct development of a subject and fulness of illustration, they resemble regular dissertations rather than familiar epistles. We could have wished, indeed, that he had suppressed the title of Letters, as it may excite in the reader an expectation of colloquial ease and grace, which will not be gratified in the perusal. A little attention to this circumstance, though it might have impaired the regularity of their method, would have rendered them more fascinating. The subjects appear to us well chosen, sufficiently uncommon to afford scope for original remarks, and important enough to call forth the exertions of the strongest powers. They are the following: 1. On a Man's writing Memoirs of himself; 2. On Decision of Character; 3. On the Application of the Epithet Romantic; 4. On some of the Causes by which Evangelical Religion has been rendered less acceptable to Persons of cultivated Taste.

We shall endeavor to give our readers an idea of the general design of each of these essays; and to enable them, by a few extracts, to judge of the manner in which that design is executed.

In the first essay, the author expatiates at large on the influence of external events in the formation of character. This influence he traces to four sources:—instruction, companionship, reading, and attention to the state and manners of mankind.

Among the many objects calculated to form the character and impress the heart,

Mr. F. enumerates natural scenery; at the same time deploring that want of fancy and sensibility which often renders it productive of so little effect. The passage in which he adverts to this subject is so beautiful, that we cannot prevail on ourselves to withhold it from the reader. He will see at once that the writer has viewed nature with the eye of a poet, and has deeply imbibed the delicious enchantment which he so eloquently describes.

"It might be supposed that the scenes of nature, an amazing assemblage of phenomena, if their effect were not lost through familiarity would have a powerful influence on all opening minds, and transfuse into the internal economy of ideas and sentiment something of a character and a color correspondent to the beauty, vicissitude, and grandeur which continually press on the senses. On minds of genius they often have this effect; and Beattie's *Minstrel* may be as just as it is a fascinating description of such a spirit. But on the greatest number this influence operates feebly; you will not see the process in children, nor the result in mature persons. The charms of nature are objects only of sight and hearing, not of sensibility and imagination; and even the sight and hearing do not receive impressions sufficiently distinct or forcible for clear recollection; it is not, therefore, strange that these impressions seldom go so much deeper than the senses as to awaken pensiveness or enthusiasm, and fill the mind with an interior permanent scenery of beautiful images at his own command. This defect of fancy and sensibility is unfortunate amid a creation infinitely rich with grand and beautiful objects, which, imparting something more than images to a mind adapted and habituated to converse with nature, inspire an exquisite sentiment that seems like the emanation of a spirit residing in them. It is unfortunate, I have thought within these few minutes, while looking out on one of the most enchanting nights of the most interesting season of the year, and hearing the voices of a company of persons, to whom I can perceive that this soft and solemn shade over the earth, the calm sky, the beautiful stripes of cloud, the stars, and waning moon just risen, are things not in the least more interesting than the walls, ceiling, and candlelight of a room."—Vol. I. pp. 26, 27. Pp. 22, 23, *Seventh Edition.*

Towards the close of the essay, in tracing the steps by which some have arrived at the last stage of daring impiety, the denial of a God, the author evinces, in a masterly manner, the presumption of the atheist, and places the extreme absurdity of pretending to demonstrate the non-existence of a Deity in a light in which we do not remember to have seen it exhibited. Speaking of a pretended heroism attached to atheistic impiety, he adds:

"But, indeed, it is heroism no longer, if he *knows* that there is no God. The wonder then turns on the great process by which a man could grow to the immense intelligence that can know that there is no God. What ages and what lights are requisite for THIS attainment! This intelligence involves the very attributes of divinity, while a God is denied. For unless this man is omnipresent, unless he is at this moment in every place in the universe, he cannot know but there may be in some place manifestations of a Deity by which even *he* would be overpowered. If he does not know absolutely every agent in the universe, the one that he does not know may be God. If he is not himself the chief agent in the universe, and does not know what is so, that which is so may be God. If he is not in absolute possession of all the propositions that constitute universal truth, the one which he wants may be that there is a God. If he cannot with certainty assign the cause of all that exists, that cause may be a God. If he does not know every thing that has been done in the immeasurable ages that are past, some things may have been done by a God. Thus, unless he knows all things, that is, precludes another Deity, by being one himself, he cannot know that the Being whose existence he rejects does not exist. But he must *know* that he does not exist, else he deserves equal contempt and compassion for the temerity with which he firmly avows his rejection, and acts accordingly."—Vol. I. pp. 60—62. Pp. 48, 49, *Seventh Edition.*

The next essay, *On Decision of Character*, appears to us superior to the former. The subject is pursued with greater regularity, the conceptions are more profound, and the style is more chaste and classical. After placing in strong contrast the features of a decisive and of an irresolute character, he proceeds to analyze the elements of which the former is composed. Among these, he assigns the first place to a firm confidence in our own judgment; which, he justly observes, notwithstanding the general disposition of mankind to overrate their powers, is no common attainment. With those who are most disposed to think highly of their own abilities, it is common, when they arrive at the moment of action, to distrust their judgment; and, as the author beautifully expresses it, "their mind seems all at once placed in a misty vacuity, where it reaches round on all sides, and finds nothing to lay hold of." The next ingredient essential to decision of character is a state of cogent feeling, an intense ardor of mind, precluding indifference and delay.

In addition to these qualities, courage is required, without which, it is obvious that resolutions the most maturely formed, are liable to vanish at the first breath of opposition. In the remaining part of the essay, Mr. F. illustrates the influence of several circumstances of an external nature, which tend to form or to augment the quality of which he has been treating. The principal of these are *opposition*, *desertion*, and *success*. It would prolong this article too much to attempt to follow the author in these particulars; suffice it to remark, that under each of them will be found many just and important observations. He concludes with briefly recommending a discipline conducive to the attainment of a decisive character. He particularly insists on the propriety of inuring the mind to a habit of reasoning; and that not in a superficial and desultory manner, but by steadily following the train till we reach a legitimate conclusion.

We cannot dismiss this part of the work without presenting our readers with an extract from the character of Howard, whose virtues have been emblazoned by the gorgeous eloquence of Burke; but we are mistaken if they have ever been painted in a more masterly manner than in the following portrait:—

"In this distinction (*decision*) no man ever exceeded, for instance, or ever will exceed, the late illustrious Howard. The energy of his determination was so great, that if, instead of being habitual, it had been shown only for a short time on particular occasions, it would have appeared a vehement impetuosity; but by being uninterrmitted it had an equability of manner, which scarcely appeared to exceed the tone of a calm constancy, it was so totally the reverse of any thing like turbulence or agitation. It was the calmness of an intensity, kept uniform by the nature of the human mind forbidding it to be more, and by the character of the individual forbidding it to be less. The habitual passion of his mind was a measure of feeling almost equal to the temporary extremes and paroxysms of common minds: as a great river in its customary state is equal to a small or moderate one when swollen to a torrent. The moment of finishing his plans in deliberation, and commencing them in action, was the same. I wonder what must have been the amount of that bribe, in emolument or pleasure, that would have detained him a week inactive after their final adjustment. The law which carries water down a declivity was not more unconquerable and invariable than the determination of his feelings towards the main object. The importance of this object held his faculties in a state of excitement which was too rigid to be affected by lighter interests, and on which, therefore, the beauties of nature and of art had no power. He had no leisure feeling which he could spare, to be diverted among the innumerable varieties of the extensive scene which he traversed; all his subordinate feelings lost their separate existence and operation, by falling into the grand one. There have not been wanting trivial minds to mark this as a fault in his character. But the mere men of taste ought to be silent respecting such a man as Howard; he is above their sphere of judgment. The invisible spirits who fulfil their commission of philanthropy among mortals do not care about pictures, statues, and sumptuous buildings; and no more did he, when the time in which he must have inspected and admired them would have been taken from the work to which he had consecrated his life.* The curiosity which he might feel was reduced to wait till the hour should arrive when its gratification should be presented by conscience, which kept a scrupulous charge of all his time, as the most sacred duty of that hour. If he was still at every hour, when it came, fated to feel the attractions of the fine arts but the second claim, they might be sure of their revenge; for no other man will ever visit Rome under such a despotic consciousness of duty, as to refuse himself time for surveying the magnificence of its ruins. Such a sin against taste is very far beyond the reach of common saintship to commit. It implied an inconceivable severity of conviction that he had *one thing to do;* and that he who would do some great thing in this short life must apply himself to the work with such a concentration of his forces, as, to idle spectators, who live only to amuse themselves, looks like insanity. His attention was so strongly and tenaciously fixed on his object, that, even at the greatest distance, as the Egyptian Pyramids to travellers, it appeared to him with a luminous distinctness as if it were nigh, and beguiled the toilsome length of labor and enterprise by which he was to reach it. It was so conspicuous before him, that not a step deviated from the direction, and every movement and every day was an approximation. As his method referred every thing he did and thought to the end, and as his exertion did not relax for a moment, he made the trial, so seldom made; what is the utmost effect which may be granted to the last possible efforts of a human agent; and, therefore, what he did not accomplish, he might conclude to be placed beyond the sphere of mortal activity,

* Mr. Howard, however, was not destitute of taste for the fine arts. His house at Cardington was better filled with paintings and drawings than any other, on a small scale, that we ever saw.—Rev.

and calmly leave to the immediate disposal of Providence."—Pp. 156—160. Pp. 125—128, *Seventh Edition.*

We have one remark to make before we conclude our review of this essay. We are a little apprehensive that the glowing colors in which the imagination of Mr. F. has painted an unyielding constancy of mind, may tend to seduce some of his readers into an intemperate admiration of that quality, without duly distinguishing the object to which it is directed, and the motives by which it is sustained. We give our author full credit for the purity of his principles; we are firmly persuaded that he is not to be classed among the impious idolaters of mental energy. But we could wish that he had more fully admonished his readers to regard resolution of character not as a virtue so much as the means of virtue; a mere instrument, that owes its value entirely to the purpose to which it is employed; and that wherever nature has conferred it, an additional obligation is imposed of purifying the principles and regulating the heart. It might at first view be thought impossible, as Mr. F. intimates, that men should be found who are as resolute in the prosecution of criminal enterprises as they could be supposed to be in the pursuit of the most virtuous objects. It is surely a melancholy proof of something wrong in the constitution of human nature, that a quality so important as that of energetic decision is so little under the regulation of principle; that constancy is so much more frequently to be seen in what is wrong than in what is right; and, in fine, that the *world* can boast so many more heroes than the *church.*

In the third essay, *On the Application of the Epithet Romantic*, Mr. Foster takes occasion to expose the eagerness with which terms of censure are adopted by men who, instead of calmly weighing the merits of an undertaking or a character, think it sufficient to express their antipathy by some opprobious appellation. The Epithet *romantic* holds a distinguished place in the vocabulary of contempt. If a scheme of action which it requires much benevolence to conceive and much vigor to execute be proposed, by many it will be thought completely exploded when they have branded it with the appellation of *romantic.* Thus selfishness and indolence, arraying themselves in the garb of wisdom, assume the pride of superiority when they ought to feel the humiliation of guilt. To imitate the highest examples, to do good in ways not usual to the same rank of life, to make great exertions and sacrifices in the cause of religion and with a view to eternal happiness, to determine without delay to reduce to practice whatever we applaud in theory, are modes of conduct which the world will generally condemn as romantic, but which this author shows to be founded on the highest reason. In unfolding the true idea of the *romantic*, as applicable to a train of sentiments or course of conduct, he ascribes whatever may be justly so denominated to the predominance of the imagination over the other powers. He points out the symptoms of this disease as apparent; in the expectation of a peculiar destiny, while the fancy paints to itself scenes of unexampled felicity; in overlooking the relation which subsists between ends and means; in counting upon casualties instead of contemplating the stated order of events; and in hoping to realize the most momentous projects without any means at all, or by means totally inadequate to the effect. Some of the illustrations which the author introduces on this part of his subject are peculiarly happy. We are delighted to find him treating with poignant ridicule those superficial pretenders who, without disavowing any dependence on divine agency, hope to reform the world and to bring back a paradisacal state by the mere force of moral instruction. For the prospect of the general prevalence of virtue and happiness we are indebted to revelation. We have no reason to suppose the minds of our modern infidels sufficiently elevated to have thought of the cessation of wars and the universal diffusion of peace and love, but for the information which they have obtained from the Scriptures. From these they derive the doctrine of a Millennium; and they have received it as they have done every thing else, only to corrupt it: for, exploding all the means by which the Scriptures have taught us to expect the completion of this event, they rely merely on the resources of reason and philosophy. They impiously deck themselves with the spoils of revelation, and take occasion from the hopes and prospects which she alone supplies, to deride her assistance and to idolize the powers of human nature. That Being who planted Christianity by miraculous interposition, and by the effusion of his Spirit produced such effects in the hearts of millions as afford a specimen and a pledge of an entire renovation, has also assured us that violence and injustice shall cease, and that *none shall hurt or destroy in all his holy mountain, because the earth shall be full of the knowledge of God.* But it seems revelation is to have no concern in this work; philosophy is to effect every thing; and we are to look to the Political Justice of Godwin and the Moral Code of Volney for that which Christians were so weak as to expect at the hand of Deity.

The conclusion which our author draws

from the insufficiency of mere human agency to effect that great renovation in the character and condition of men which revelation teaches us to expect, is most just and consolatory. We should have been happy to transcribe the passage; but lest we should exceed our limits, we refer our readers to vol. II. pp. 87, 88. Pp. 244—247, *Seventh Edition.*

The last essay in these volumes attempts to assign *some of the causes that have rendered evangelical religion less acceptable to persons of cultivated taste.* This essay is the most elaborate. Aware of the delicacy and difficulty of this subject, the author seems to have summoned all the powers of his mind, to enable him to grasp it in all its extent, and to present it in all its force and beauty. This essay is itself sufficient, in our opinion, to procure the author a brilliant and lasting reputation.

It is proper to remind our readers, that in tracing the causes which have tended to produce in men of taste an aversion to evangelical religion, Mr. F. avowedly confines himself to those which are of a *subordinate* class, while he fully admits the *primary cause* to be that *inherent corruption* of nature which renders men strongly indisposed to any communication from heaven. We could, however, have wished that he had insisted on this more largely. The Scriptures ascribe the rejection of the gospel to one general principle; "the natural man receiveth not the things of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The peculiar doctrines of Christianity are distinguished by a spirit irreconcilably at variance with that of the world. The deep repentance it enjoins strikes at the pride and levity of the human heart. The mystery of an incarnate and crucified Saviour must necessarily confound the reason and shock the prejudices of a mind that will admit nothing that it cannot perfectly reduce to the principles of philosophy. The whole tenor of the life of Christ, the objects he pursued, and the profound humiliation he exhibited, must convict of madness and folly the favorite pursuits of mankind. The virtues usually practiced in society, and the models of excellence most admired there, are so remote from that holiness which is enjoined in the New Testament, that it is impossible for a taste which is formed on the one to perceive the charms of the other. The happiness which it proposes in a union with God and a participation of the image of Christ, is so far from being congenial to the inclinations of worldly men, that it can scarcely be mentioned without exciting their ridicule and scorn. General speculations on the Deity have much to amuse the mind and to gratify that appetite for the wonderful which thoughtful and speculative men are delighted to indulge. Religion, viewed in this light, appears more in the form of an exercise to the understanding than a law to the heart. Here the soul expatiates at large, without feeling itself controlled or alarmed. But when evangelical truths are presented, they bring God so near, if we may be allowed the expression, and speak with so commanding a voice to the conscience, that they leave no alternative but that of submissive acquiescence or proud revolt. As men of taste are for the most part men of the world, not at all distinguished from others by a greater familiarity with religious ideas, these observations are applicable to them in their utmost extent.

Though we thought it right to suggest these hints, we wish not to be understood to convey any censure on Mr. F. for confining his attention principally to other topics. In discussing more fully and profoundly some of the subordinate causes which have come in aid of the primary one, to render men of cultivated taste averse to evangelical piety, we think he has rendered an important service to the public.

The first cause he assigns is that of its being the religion of many weak and uncultivated minds; in consequence of which it becomes inseparably associated in the conceptions of many with the intellectual poverty of its disciples, so as to wear a mean and degraded aspect. We regret that we cannot follow the author in his illustrations of this topic. We must be content with observing, that he has exposed the weakness of this prejudice in a most masterly and triumphant manner.

The second cause which the author assigns as having had, in his opinion, a considerable influence in prejudicing elegant and cultivated minds against evangelical piety, is the peculiarity of language adopted in the discourses and books of its teachers, the want of a more classical form of diction, and the profusion of words and phrases which are of a technical and systematical cast.

We are inclined to think, with Mr. F., that the cause of religion has suffered considerably from the circumstance here mentioned. The superabundance of phrases appropriated by some pious authors to the subject of religion, and never applied to any other purpose, has not only the effect of disgusting persons of taste, but of obscuring religion itself. As they are seldom defined, and never exchanged for equivalent words, they pass current without being understood. They are not the vehicle, they are the substitute of thought. Among a certain description of Christians, they become by degrees to be regarded with a

mystic awe, insomuch that if a writer expressed the very same ideas in different phrases he would be condemned as a heretic. To quit the magical circle of words, in which many Christians suffer themselves to be confined, excites as great a clamor as the boldest innovation in sentiment. Controversies which have been agitated with much warmth might often have been amicably adjusted, or even finally decided, could the respective partisans have been prevailed on to lay aside their predilection for phrases, and honestly resolve to examine their real import. In defiance of the dictates of candor and good sense, these have been obstinately retained, and have usually been the refuge of ignorance, the apple of discord, and the watchwords of religious hostility. In some instances the evil which we lament has sprung from a more amiable cause. The force and solemnity of devotional feelings are such, that they seem to consecrate every thing with which they have been connected; and as the bulk of pious people have received their religious impressions from teachers more distinguished for their simplicity and zeal than for comprehension of mind and copiousness of language, they learn to annex an idea of sanctity to that set of phrases with which they have been most familiar. These become the current language of religion, to which subsequent writers conform, partly perhaps from indolence, and partly from a fear of offending their brethren.

To these causes we may add the contentious and sectarian spirit of modern times, which has taught the different parties of Christians to look on one another with an unnatural horror, to apprehend contamination from the very phrases employed by each other, and to invent, each for itself, a dialect as narrow and exclusive as their whimsical singularities. But while we concur in the main with Mr. F. on this subject, we are disposed to think that he has carried his representations to far, both with respect to the magnitude of the abuse itself, and the probable advantages which would ensue on its removal. The repugnance of the human mind in its unenlightened state to the peculiarities of the Christian doctrine is such, that we have little hope of its yielding to the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely. Till it is touched and humbled by grace, we are apprehensive that it will retain its aversion, and not suffer itself to be cheated into an approbation of the gospel by an artifice of words. Exhibit evangelical religion in what colors you will, the worldly-minded and the careless, will shrink from the obtrusion of unwelcome ideas. Cowper has become, in spite of his religion, a popular poet, but his success has not been such as to make religion popular; nor have the gigantic genius and fame of Milton shielded from the ridicule and contempt of his admirers that system of religion which he beheld with awful adoration.

In treating subjects properly theological, we apprhend great caution should be used not to deviate wantonly and unnecessarily from the phraseology of Scripture. The apostle tells us, that in preaching the gospel he did not use the enticing words of man's wisdom, but such words as the Holy Ghost taught him. We do not, indeed, contend that in the choice of *every* particular word or phrase he was immediately inspired; but we think it reasonable to believe that the unction which was on his heart, and the perfect illumination that he possessed, led him to employ such terms in the statement of the mysteries of Christianity as were better adapted than any other to convey their real import, which we are the more inclined to conclude, from observing the sameness of phraseology which pervades the writings of the apostles when they are treating on the same subject. As the truths which the revelation of the New Testament unfolds are perfectly original and transcendently important, it might naturally be expected that the communication of them would give birth to an original cast of phraseology, or, in other words, a steady adherence to certain terms, in order to render the ideas which they conveyed fixed, precise and unchangeable.

In teaching the principles of every science, it is found necessary to select or invent terms which, though originally of a more lax signification, are afterwards restricted and confined *to one peculiar modification of thought*, and constitute the technical language of that science. Such terms are always capable of being defined, (for mere words convey nothing to the mind;) but to substitute a definition in their place would be tedious circumlocution, and to exchange the term itself for a different one would frequently lead to dangerous mistakes.

In the original elementary parts of a language there are, in truth, few or no synonymes; for what should prompt men, in the early period of literature, to invent a word that neither conveyed any new idea, nor enabled them to present an old one with more force and precision? In the progress of refinement, indeed, regard to copiousness and harmony has enriched language with many exotics, which are merely those words in a foreign language that perfectly correspond to terms in our own; as *felicity* for *happiness*, *celestial* for *heavenly*, and a multitude of others. Since, then, the nature of language is such that no two terms are exactly of the same force and import (except in the case last mentioned,) we cannot but apprehend that dangerous consequen-

ces would result from a studied attempt to vary from the standard phraseology where the statement of doctrines is concerned, and that by changing the terms the ideas themselves might be changed or mutilated. In teaching a religion designed for the use and benefit of all mankind, it is certainly desirable that the technical words, the words employed in a peculiar and appropriate sense, should be few: but to fix and perpetuate the ideas, and to preserve *the faith once delivered to the saints* from the caprices of fancy and the dangers of innovation, it seems necessary that there should be some. We are inclined to think, that in inculcating Christian morality, and in appeals and addresses to the heart, a much greater latitude may be safely indulged than in the statement of *peculiar doctrines;* and that a more bold and varied diction, with a wider range of illustration and allusion than is usually employed, would often be attended with the happiest effect. Mr. Foster has given, in many parts of these volumes, beautiful specimens of what we intend.

With respect to the copious use of Scripture language, which Mr. F. condemns (in our opinion with too much severity) as giving an uncouth and barbarous air to theological books, we prefer a middle course; without applauding the excess to which it is carried by many pious writers, on the one hand, or wishing it to be kept so entirely apart as Mr. F. contends, on the other. To say nothing of the inimitable beauties of the Bible, considered in a literary view, which are universally acknowledged, it is the book which every devout man is accustomed to consult as the oracle of God; it is the companion of his best moments, and the vehicle of his strongest consolations. Intimately associated in his mind with every thing dear and valuable, its diction more powerfully excites devotional feelings than any other; and when temperately and soberly used, imparts an unction to a religious discourse which nothing else can supply. Besides, is there not room to apprehend that a studied avoidance of the Scripture phraseology, and a care to express all that it is supposed to contain in the forms of classical diction, might ultimately lead to a neglect of the Scriptures themselves, and a habit of substituting flashy and superficial declamation, in the room of the saving truths of the gospel? Such an apprehension is but too much verified by the most celebrated sermons of the French; and still more by some modern compositions in our own language, which usurp that title. For devotional impression, we conceive that a very considerable tincture of the language of Scripture, or at least such a coloring as shall discover an intimate acquaintance with those inimitable models, will generally succeed best.

It is impossible to establish a universal rule, since different methods are equally adapted to different purposes; and therefore we are willing to allow, with Mr. F., that where the fashionable and the gay are addressed, and the prejudices arising from a false refinement are to be conciliated, whatever in the diction might repel by an appearance of singularity should be carefully shunned. Accordingly, we equally admire, in *The rise and Progress of Religion* by Dr. Doddridge, and in *The Rural Philosophy* of Mr. Bates, the dexterity with which these excellent writers have suited their composition to their respective classes of readers. On the whole, let it once for all be remembered, that men of taste form a very small part of the community, of no greater consequence in the eyes of their Creator than others; that the end of all religious discourse is the salvation of souls; and that to a mind which justly estimates the weight of eternal things, it will appear a greater honor to have converted a sinner from the error of his way, than to have wielded the thunder of a Demosthenes, or to have kindled the flame of a Cicero.

We hasten to close this article, by making a few observations on the last cause which our author has assigned for the general distaste that persons of polite and elegant attainments usually discover towards evangelical religion. This is, the neglect and contempt with which it has been almost constantly treated by our fine writers; of whose delinquency, in this respect, the author takes a wide and extensive survey, exposing their criminality with a force of eloquence that has perhaps never before been exerted on this subject. Though his attention is chiefly directed to the influence of modern literature, yet, as the writings of the ancients, and especially of the poets, have had a powerful operation in forming the taste and sentiments of succeeding generations, he has extended his notice to these, and has made some most striking animadversions on the ancient authors of the epopœia, and particularly on Homer.

We must do justice to his intrepidity in venturing to attack the idol of all classical scholars; nor can he have failed to foresee the manner in which it will be attempted to be repelled. They will remind him, that the lawfulness of defensive war has seldom been called in question; that the one in which Homer's heroes were engaged was not only just, but meritorious, being undertaken to avenge a most signal affront and injury; that no subject could be more suited to the epic muse, either on account of its magnitude or the deep inter-

est it excited; that having chosen it, the poet is to be commended for throwing into it all the fire of which it was susceptible; that to cherish in the breasts of youth a gallant and warlike spirit is the surest defence of nations; and that this spirit, under proper regulations, constitutes that θυμοειδης which Plato extols so highly in his republic, as the basis of a manly, heroic character. This, and much more than this, will be said: but when our Grecians have spent all their arrows, it will still remain an incontestable fact, that an enthusiastic admiration of the Iliad of Homer is but a bad preparation for relishing the beauties of the New Testament. What then is to be done? Shall we abandon the classics, and devote ourselves solely to the perusal of modern writers, where the maxims inculcated and the principles taught are little, if at all, more in unison with those of Christianity? a fact which Mr. F. acknowledges and deplores. While things continue as they are, we are apprehensive, therefore, that we should gain nothing by neglecting the unrivalled productions of genius left us by the ancients, but a deterioration of taste, without any improvement in religion. The evil is not to be corrected by any partial innovation of this kind. Until a more Christian spirit pervades the world, we are inclined to think that the study of the classics is, on the whole, advantageous to public morals, by inspiring an elegance of sentiment and an elevation of soul which we should in vain seek for elsewhere.

The total inattention of the great majority of our fine writers to all the distinguishing features of the religion they profess, affords a most melancholy reflection. It has no doubt excited the notice of many, and has been deeply lamented; but it has never been placed in a light so serious and affecting as in the volumes before us. In the observations which our author makes on the Essay on Man, we are delighted and surprised to find at once so much philosophical truth and poetical beauty. His critique on the writings of Adisson and Johnson evinces deep penetration; and as respects the former, is uncommonly impressive and important.

We take our leave of this work with sincere reluctance. For the length to which we have extended our review, the subject must be our apology. It has fared with us as with a traveller who passes through an enchanting country, where he meets with so many beautiful views and so many striking objects which he is loath to quit, that he loiters till the shades of the evening insensibly fall upon him. We are far, however, from recommending these volumes as faultless. Mr. F.'s work is rather an example of the power of genius than a specimen of finished composition: it lies open in many points to the censure of those minor critics who, by the observation of a few technical rules, may easily avoid its faults without reaching one of its beauties. The author has paid too little attention to the construction of his sentences. They are for the most part too long, sometimes involved in perplexity, and often loaded with redundances. They have too much of the looseness of an harangue and too little of the compact elegance of regular composition. An occasional obscurity pervades some parts of the work. The mind of the writer seems at times to struggle with conceptions too mighty for his grasp, and to present confused masses, rather than distinct delineations of thought. This, however, is to be imputed to the originality, not the weakness of his powers. The scale on which he thinks is so vast, and the excursions of his imagination are so extended, that they frequently carry him into the most unbeaten track, and among objects where a ray of light glances in an angle only, without diffusing itself over the whole. On ordinary topics his conceptions are luminous in the highest degree. He places the idea which he wishes to present in such a flood of light, that it is not merely visible itself, but it seems to illumine all around it. He paints metaphysics, and has the happy art of arraying what in other hands would appear cold and comfortless abstractions, in the warmest colors of fancy. Without the least affectation of frivolous ornaments, without quitting his argument in pursuit of imagery, his imagination becomes the perfect handmaid of his reason, ready at every moment to spread her canvass and present her pencil. But what pleases us most, and affords us the highest satisfaction, is to find such talents enlisted on the side of true Christianity; nor can we help indulging a benevolent triumph at the accession of powers to the cause of evangelical piety, which its most distinguished opponents would be proud to possess.

THE END.

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

WORTHY OF ALL ACCEPTATION.

PART I.

The subject shown to be important, stated, and explained.

God, having blessed mankind with the glorious gospel of his Son, hath spoken much in his word, as it might be supposed he would, of the treatment it should receive from those to whom it was addressed. A cordial reception of it is called, in Scripture, *receiving Christ*, *allowing him*, *believing in him*, *&c.*, and the contrary, *refusing*, *disallowing*, and *rejecting him;* and those who thus reject him are, in so doing, said to *judge themselves unworthy of everlasting life.** These are things on which the New Testament largely insists: great stress is there laid on the reception which the truth shall meet with. The same lips which commissioned the apostles to go and "preach the gospel to every creature," added, "He that *believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*" "To as many as *received him*, to them gave he power to become the sons of God;" but to them "who receive him not," but refused him, and rejected his way of salvation, he became a stumbling stone, and a rock of offence, that they might stumble, and fall, and perish. Thus the gospel, according to the different reception it meets with, becomes a "savor of life unto life, or of death unto death."

The controversies which have arisen concerning faith in Jesus Christ are not so much an object of surprise as the conduct of those who, professing to be Christians, affect to decry the subject as a matter of little or no importance. There is not any principle or exercise of the human mind of which the New Testament speaks so frequently, and on which so great a stress is laid. And, with regard to the inquiry whether faith be required of all men who hear, or have opportunity to hear, the word, it cannot be uninteresting. If it be not, to inculcate it would be unwarrantable and cruel to our fellow-sinners, as it subjects them to an additional charge of abundance of guilt: but, if it be, to explain it away is to undermine the divine prerogative, and, as far as it goes, to subvert the very intent of the promulgation of the gospel, which is that men "should believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and, believing, have life through his name." John xx. 31. This is doubtless a very serious thing, and ought to be seriously considered. Though some good men may be implicated in this matter, it becomes them to remember that "whosoever breaketh one of the least of Christ's commandments, and teacheth men so, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven." If believing be a commandment, it cannot be one of the *least:* the important relations which it sustains, as well as the dignity of its object, must prevent this: the knowledge of sin, repentance for it, and gratitude for pardoning mercy, all depend upon our admitting it. And, if it be a *great* commandment, the breach of it must be a great sin; and whosoever teaches men otherwise is a partaker of their guilt; and, if they perish, will be found to have been accessary to their eternal ruin. Let it be considered whether the apostle to the Hebrews did not proceed upon such principles, when he exclaimed, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so *great* salvation?" And the Lord Jesus himself when he declared, "*He that believeth not shall be damned!*"

In order to determine whether faith in Christ be the duty of all men who have opportunity to hear the gospel, it will be necessary to determine what it is, or wherein it consists. Some have maintained that it consists in a persuasion of our interest in Christ and in all the benefits and blessings of his mediation. The author of *The Further Inquiry*, Mr. L. Wayman, of Kimbolton, who wrote about sixty years ago upon the subject, questions "whether there be any act of special faith which hath not the nature of appropriation in it," (p. 13;) and by appropriation he appears to mean a persuasion of our interest in spiritual blessings. This is the ground upon which he rests the main body of his argument: to overturn it, therefore, will be in effect to answer his book. Some who would not be thought to maintain that a persuasion of interest in Christ is essential to faith, for the sake of many Christians whom they cannot but observe, upon this principle, to be, generally speaking, unbelievers, yet maintain what fully implies it. Though they will allow,

* John i. 12; iii. 16. Ps. cxviii. 22. 1 Pet. ii. 7. Matt. xxi. 42. Acts. xiii. 46.

for the comfort of such Christians, that assurance is not of the essence of faith (understanding by assurance an assured persuasion of our salvation) but that *a reliance on Christ* is sufficient; yet, in almost all other things, they speak as if they did not believe what at those times they say. It is common for such persons to call those fears which occupy the minds of Christians, lest they should miss of salvation at last, by the name of unbelief; and to reprove them for being guilty of this God-dishonoring sin, exhorting them to be strong in faith, like Abraham, giving glory to God; when all that is meant is, that they should, without doubting, believe the goodness of their state. If this be saving faith, it must inevitably follow that it is not the duty of unconverted sinners; for they are not interested in Christ, and it cannot possibly be their duty to believe a lie. But, if it can be proved that the proper object of saving faith is not our being interested in Christ, but the glorious gospel of the ever blessed God, (which is true whether we believe it or not,) a contrary inference must be drawn; for it is admitted, on all hands, that it is the duty of every man to believe what God reveals.

I have no objection to allowing that true faith "hath in it the nature of appropriation," if by this term be meant an application of the truths believed to our own particular cases. "When the Scriptures teach," says a pungent writer, "*we* are to receive instruction, for the enlightening of *our own* minds; when they admonish, *we* are to take warning; when they reprove, *we* are to be checked; when they comfort *we* are to be cheered and encouraged; and, when they recommend any grace, *we* are to desire and embrace it; when they command any duty, *we* are to hold ourselves enjoined to do it; when they promise, *we* are to hope; when they threaten, *we* are to be terrified, as if the judgment were denounced against *us;* and when they forbid any sin, *we* are to think they forbid it unto *us*. By which application we shall make all the rich treasures contained in the Scriptures wholly our own, and in such a powerful and peculiar manner enjoy the fruit and benefit of them, as if they had been wholly written *for us*, and none other else besides us."*

By saving faith, we undoubtedly embrace Christ *for ourselves*, in the same sense as Jacob embraced Jehovah as *his* God, (Gen. xxviii. 21;) that is, to a rejecting of every idol that stands in competition with him. Christ is all-sufficient, and suited to save *us*, as well as others; and it is for the forgiveness of *our* sins that we put our trust in him. But this is very different from a persuasion of our being in a state of salvation.

My objections to this notion of faith are as follow:

First: Nothing can be an object of faith, except what God has revealed in his word; but the interest that any individual has in Christ and the blessings of the gospel, more than another, is not revealed. God has no where declared, concerning any one of us, as individuals, that we shall be saved: all that he has revealed on this subject respects us *as characters*. He has abundantly promised that all who *believe in him*, *love him*, and *obey him*, shall be saved; and a persuasion that, *if we sustain these characters*, we shall be saved, is doubtless an exercise of faith: but, whether we do or not, is an object not of faith, but of consciousness. "Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. Whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him." "My little children, let us not love in word and in tongue, but in deed and in truth: hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him."* If any one imagine that God has revealed to him his interest in his love; and this in a special, immediate, and extraordinary manner, and not by exciting in him the holy exercises of grace, and thereby begeting a consciousness of his being a subject of grace, let him beware lest he deceive his soul. The Jews were not wanting in what some would call the faith of assurance: "We have one Father," said they, "even God:" but Jesus answered, "If God were your Father, ye would love me."

Secondly: The Scriptures always represent faith as terminating on something without us; namely, on Christ, and the truths concerning him: but, if it consists in a persuasion of our being in a state of salvation, it must terminate principally on something within us: namely the work of grace in our hearts; for to believe myself interested in Christ is the same thing as to believe myself a subject of special grace. And hence, as was said, it is common for many who entertain this notion of faith to consider its opposite, unbelief, as a *doubting whether we have been really converted*. But, as it is the truth and excellence of the *things to be interested in* and not his *interest in* them, that the sinner is apt to disbelieve; so it is these, and not that on which the faith of the believer primarily terminates. Perhaps what relates to personal interest may in general, more properly be called *hope* than faith; and its opposite *fear*, than unbelief.

* Downame's Guide to Godliness, p. 647.

* 1 John ii, 3, 5; iii, 18, 19.

Thirdly: to believe ourselves in a state of salvation (however desirable, when grounded on evidence) is far inferior in its object to saving faith. The grand object on which faith fixes is the glory of Christ, and not the happy condition we are in, as interested in him. The latter doubtless affords great consolation; and the more we discover of his excellence the more ardently shall we desire an interest in him, and be the more disconsolate while it continues a matter of doubt. But, if we be concerned only for our own security, our faith is vain, and we are yet in our sins. As that repentance which fixes merely on the consequences of sin as subjecting us to misery is selfish and spurious, so that faith which fixes merely on the consequences of Christ's mediation as raising us to happiness is equally selfish and spurious. It is the peculiar property of true faith to endear Christ: "Unto you that believe, *he* is precious." And where this is the case, if there be no impediments arising from constitutional dejection or other accidental causes, we shall not be in doubt about an interest in him. Consolation will accompany the faith of the gospel: "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Fourthly: All those exercises of faith which our Lord so highly commends in the New Testament, as that of the centurion, the woman of Canaan, and others, are represented as terminating on his *all-sufficiency* to heal them, and not as consisting in a persuasion that they were interested in the divine favor, and therefore should succeed. "Speak the word only," says the one, "and my servant shall be healed; for I am a man in authority, having soldiers under me; and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth: and to another, Come, and he cometh: and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it." Such was the persuasion which the other entertained of his all-sufficiency to help her that she judged it enough if she might but partake of the crumbs of his table; the scatterings as it were of mercy. Similar to this is the following language: "If I may but touch the hem of his garment, I shall be made whole." Believe ye that I am *able* to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord." "Lord, if thou wilt, thou *canst* make me clean." "If thou *canst* do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us: Jesus said, If thou *canst* believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." I allow that the case of these people, and that of a sinner applying for forgiveness, are not exactly the same. Christ had no where promised to heal all who came for healing; but he has graciously bound himself not to cast out any who come to him for mercy. On this account, there is a greater ground for faith in the willingness of Christ to save than there was in his willingnes to heal: and there was less unbelief in the saying of the leper, "*If thou wilt*, thou canst make me clean," than there would be in similar language from one who, convinced of his own utter insufficiency, applied to him for salvation. But a persuasion of Christ being both able and willing to save all them that come unto God by him, and consequently to save us if we so apply, is very different from a persuasion that we are the children of God, and interested in the blessings of the gospel.

Mr. Anderson, an American writer, has lately published a pamphlet on the *Scripture doctrine of the Appropriation which is in the Nature of saving Faith.* The scheme which he attempts to defend is that of Hervey, Marshall, &c., or that which in Scotland is known by the name of the *Marrow* doctrine.* These divines write much about the gospel containing *a gift or grant* of Christ and spiritual blessings to sinners of mankind; and that it is the office of faith so to receive the gift as to claim it as our own; and thus they seem to have supposed that it becomes our own. But the gospel contains no *gift* or *grant* to mankind in general beyond that of an offer or free invitation and thus, indeed, Mr. Boston, in his notes on the *Marrow of Modern Divinity*, seems to explain it. It warrants every sinner to believe in Christ for salvation; but no one to conclude himself interested in salvation till he has believed: consequently, such a conclusion, even where it is well founded, cannot be faith, but that which follows it.

Mr. Anderson is careful to distinguish the appropriation for which he contends from "the knowledge of our being believers, or already in a state of grace."—P. 61. He also acknowledges that the ground of saving faith "is something that may be known before, and in order to the act of faith;" that it is "among the things that are revealed, and which belong to us and to our children." P. 60. Yet he makes it of the essence of faith, to believe "that Christ *is ours*." P. 56. It must be *true*, then, that Christ is ours, antecedently to our believing it, and whether we believe it or not. This, it seems, Mr. Anderson will admit; for he holds that "God hath made a *gift* or *grant* of Christ and spiritual blessings to sinners of mankind," and which denominates him ours "before we believe it." Yet he does not admit the final salvation of all to whom Christ is thus supposed to be given. To what, therefore, does the gift amount, more than to a free invitation, concerning which

* Alluding to a work published some years since, under the title of "The Marrow of Modern Divinity."

his opponents have no dispute with him? A free invitation, though it affords a warrant to apply for mercy, and that with an assurance of success; yet gives no *interest* in its blessings, but on the supposition of its being accepted. Neither does the gift for which Mr. A. contends: nothing is conveyed by it that insures any man's salvation. All the author says, therefore, against what he calls *conditions* of salvation, is no less applicable to his own scheme than to that of his own opponents. His scheme is as really conditional as theirs. The condition which it prescribes for our becoming interested in the blessings of eternal life, so interested, at least, as to possess them, is, to believe them to be our own; and without this he supposes, we shall never enjoy them.

He contends, indeed, that the belief of the promises cannot be called a condition of our right to claim an interest in them; because, if such belief *be* claiming an interest in them, it would be making a thing the condition of itself. Pp. 50, 51. But to this it is replied: First, Although Mr. A. considers saving faith as *including* appropriation, yet this is only one idea which he ascribes to it. He explains it as consisting of three things: a *persuasion* of divine truth, wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit; a *sure* persuasion; and an *appropriating* persuasion of Christ's being ours. Pp. 54—56. Now, though it were allowed that the last branch of this definition is the same thing as claiming an interest in the promises, and therefore cannot be reckoned the condition of it, yet this is more than can be said of the former two, which are no less essential to saving faith than the other. Secondly, The sense in which the promise is *taken*, by what is called appropriating faith, is not the same as that in which it is *given* in the promise itself. As given in the word, the promise is general, applying equally to one sinner as to another; but, as taken, it is considered as particular, and as insuring salvation. Thirdly, If an *interest* in the righteousness of Christ were the immediate object of saving faith, how could it be said that "unto us it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus from the dead?" If Christ's righteousness be ours, it must be so as imputed to us: but this would be making the apostle say, If we believe Christ's righteousness to *be* imputed to us, it *shall be* imputed to us.

I have no partiality for calling faith, or any thing done by us, the condition of salvation; and, if by the term were meant a deed to be performed of which the promised good is the reward, it would be inadmissible. If I had used the term, it would have been merely to express the necessary connection of things, or that faith is *that without which there is no salvation;* and, in this sense, it is no less a condition in Mr. A's scheme than in that which he opposes. He thinks, however, that the promises of God are, by his statement of things, disencumbered of conditions; yet how he can prove that God has absolutely given Christ and spiritual blessings to multitudes who will never possess them, I am at a loss to conceive. I should have supposed that whatever God has absolutely promised would take effect. He says, indeed, that "the Lord may give an absolute promise to those who, in the event, never come to the actual enjoyment of the promised blessing, as in the case of the Israelites being brought to the good land (Exod. iii. 17,) though the bulk of them that left Egypt perished in the wilderness through unbelief. P. 43. It is true, God absolutely promised to plant them, "*as a nation*," in the good land, and this he performed; but he did not absolutely promise that every individual who left Egypt should be amongst them. So far as it respected individuals (unless it were in reference to Caleb and Joshua) the promise was not absolute.

Upon the mere ground of Christ being exhibited in the gospel, "I am persuaded," says Mr. A., "that he is *my* Saviour; nor can I, without casting reproach upon the wisdom, faithfulness, and mercy of God, in setting him forth, entertain any doubts about my justification and salvation through his name." P. 65. Has God *promised* justification and salvation, then, to every one to whom Christ is exhibited? If he has, it doubtless belongs to faith to give him credit: but, in this case, we ought also to maintain that the promise will be performed, whatever be the state of our minds; for, though we believe not, he abideth faithful. On the other hand, if the blessing of justification, though freely offered to all, be only promised for believers, it is not faith, but presumption, to be persuaded of my justification, any otherwise than as being conscious of my believing in Jesus for it.

Mr. A. illustrates his doctrine by a similitude. "Suppose that a great and generous prince had made a grant to a certain class of persons, therein described, of large estates, including all things suitable to their condition; and had publicly declared that, whosoever of the persons so described would believe such an estate, in virtue of the grant now mentioned, to be his own, should not be disappointed, but should immediately enter upon the granted estate, according to the order specified in the grant. Suppose, too, that the royal donor had given the grant in writing, and had added his seal, and his oath, and his gracious invitation, and his most earnest entreaty, and his authoritative command, to induce the persons

ing had access to read or hear the grant, must either be verily persuaded that the granted estate is his own, or be chargeable with an attempt to bring dishonor upon the goodness, the veracity, the power, and authority of the donor; on account of which attempt he is liable not only to be debarred forever from the granted estate, but to suffer a most exemplary and tremendous punishment." P. 66.

I suppose the object of this similitude is expressed in the sentence, "It is evident that any one of these persons, having had access to read or hear the grant, must either be verily persuaded that the granted estate *is his own*, or be chargeable with dishonoring the donor." In what sense, then, *is it his own?* He is freely invited to partake of it; that is all. It is not so his own but that he may ultimately be debarred from possessing it: but in whatever sense *it is* his own, that is the only sense in which he is warranted to *believe it to be so.* If the condition of his actually possessing it be his believing that he shall actually possess it, he must believe what was not revealed at the time, except conditionally, and what would not have been true but for his believing it.

The above similitude may serve to illustrate Mr. A's scheme; but I know of nothing like it, either in the concerns of men or the oracles of God. I will venture to say there never was a gift or grant made upon any such terms; and the man that should make it would expose himself to ridicule. The Scriptures furnish us with an illustration of another kind. The gospel is a feast freely provided; and sinners of mankind are freely invited to partake of it. There is no mention of any gift, or grant, distinct from this, but this itself is a ground sufficient. It affords a complete warrant for any sinner, not indeed to believe the provisions to be his own, whether he accepts the invitation or not, but that relinquishing every thing that stands in competition with them, and receiving them as a free gift, they shall be his own. "If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." "To us it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead." Those who were persuaded to embrace the invitation are not described as coming to make a claim of it as their property, but as gratefully accepting it: and those who refused are not represented as doubting whether the feast was provided for them, but as making light of it, and preferring their farms and merchandise before it.

In short, if this writer can prove it to be true that justification and eternal life are absolutely given, granted, and promised, to all who hear the gospel, there can be no dispute whether saving faith includes the belief of it with respect to ourselves, nor whether it be a duty, but, if the thing be false, it can be no part of the faith of the gospel, nor of the duty of a sinner to give credit to it.

But to return. That the belief of the truth which God hath revealed in the Scriptures concerning Christ is saving faith is evident from the following passages:— "Go preach the gospel to every creature: he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Believing, here, manifestly refers to the gospel to be preached, and the rejection of which would subject the unbeliever to certain damnation. "These things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that, believing, ye might have life through his name." Believing unto life is here described as a persuasion of Jesus being the Christ, the Son of God; and that on the ground of what was written in the Scriptures. "Those by the way-side are they that hear: then cometh the devil and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved." This language plainly denotes that a real belief of the word is connected with salvation. Peter confessed, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus answered, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven." Here it is plainly intimated that a belief of Jesus being the Christ, the Son of the living God, is saving faith; and that no man can be strictly said to do this, unless he be the subject of a spiritual illumination from above. To the same purpose are those express declarations of Paul and John: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believeth in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."— Whoso believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him and he in God." "He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true." "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Spirit." Again, "While ye have the light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light." The light they then had was that of the gospel; and had they believed it they would have been the children of light, or true Christians. "Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth." "These things I say that ye might be saved." Our Lord could not mean less by this language than that, if they believed those things which John testified, and which he himself confirmed, they would be saved:

which is the same thing as declaring it to be the saving faith. Christ "shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day." The words in a parenthesis are evidently intended to give the reason of the phrase, "them that believe," and intimate that it was the belief of the gospel testimony that denominated them believers. "God hath chosen us to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." It cannot be doubted that, by the "belief of the truth," is here meant faith in Christ; and its being connected with sanctification of the Spirit and eternal salvation proves it to be saving.

If the foregoing passages be admitted to prove the point, (and if they do not we may despair of learning any thing from the Scriptures,) the duty of unconverted sinners to believe in Christ cannot fairly be called in question; for, as before said, it is admitted on all hands that it is the duty of every man to believe what God reveals.

But, to this statement, it is objected that Christianity having at that time great opposition made to it, and its professors being consequently exposed to great persecution and reproach, the belief and acknowledgement of the gospel was more a test of sincerity than it now is: men are now taught the principles of the Christian religion from their youth, and believe them, and are not ashamed to acknowledge them; while yet they give no evidence of their being born of God, but on the contrary. There is some force in this objection, so far as it respects a confession of Christ's name; but I do not perceive that it affects the belief of the gospel. It was no more difficult to believe the truth at that time than at this, though it might be much more so to avow it. With respect to that traditional assent which is given to Christianity in some nations, it is of the same nature as that which is given to Mahometanism and Paganism in others. It is no more than that of the Jewish nation in the time of our Lord towards the Mosaic Scriptures. They declared themselves to be Moses' disciples, and had no doubt but they believed him; yet our Lord did not allow that they believed his writings. "Had ye believed Moses," said he, "ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me." The same is doubtless true of all others who assent to his gospel, merely from having been educated in it. Did they believe it, they would be consistent and embrace those things which are connected with it. It is worthy of remark that those professors of Christianity who received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, are represented as not believing the truth, and as having pleasure in unrighteousness. 2 Thess. ii. 10. 12. To admit the existence of a few facts, without possessing any sense of their humiliating implication, their holy nature, their vast importance, or the practical consequences that attach to them is to admit the body without the spirit. Paul notwithstanding his knowledge of the law, and great zeal on its behalf, while blind to its spirituality, reckoned himself to be "without the law." Rom. vii. 9. And such are those professing Christians, with respect to the gospel, "who receive not the love of the truth, that they may be saved."

It is farther objected that men are said to have believed the gospel, who, notwithstanding, were destitute of true religion. Thus some among the chief rulers are said to have "believed in Jesus; but did not confess him: for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." It is said of Simon that he "believed also;" yet he was "in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity." Agrippa is acknowledged by Paul to have *believed the prophets;* and faith is attributed even to the devils. The term *belief*, like almost every other term, is sometimes used in an improper sense. Judas is said to have *repented* and hanged himself, though nothing more is meant by it than his being smitten with remorse, wishing he had not done as he did, on account of the consequences. Through the poverty of language there is not a name for every thing that differs, and therefore where two things have the same visible appearance, and differ only in some circumstances which are invisible, it is common to call them by the same name. Thus men are termed *honest* who are punctual in their dealings, though such conduct in many instances may arise merely from a regard to their own credit, interest, or safety. Thus the remorse of Judas is called *repentance;* and thus the convictions of the Jewish rulers, of Simon, and Agrippa, and the fearful apprehension of apostate angels, from what they had already felt, is called *faith.* But as we do not infer, from the application of the term *repentance* to the feelings of Judas, that there is nothing spiritual in *real* repentance, so neither ought we to conclude, from the foregoing applications of the term *believing*, that there is nothing spiritual in a *real* belief of the gospel.

"The objects of faith," it has been said, "are not bare axioms or propositions: the act of the believer does not terminate at an axiom, but at *the thing;* for axioms are not formed but that by them knowledge may be had of *things.*" To believe a bare axiom or proposition, in distinction from the thing, must be barely to believe that such and such letters make certain words, and that such words put together have a cer-

tain meaning; but who would call this believing the proposition? To believe the proposition is to believe *the thing*. Letters, syllables, words, and propositions, are only means of conveyance; and these, as such, are not the objects of faith, but *the thing conveyed*. Nevertheless, those things must have a conveyance, ere they can be believed in. The *person, blood*, and *righteousness of Christ*, for instance, are often said to be objects of faith; and this they doubtless are, as they are objects held forth to us by the language of Scripture: but they could not meet our faith, unless something were *affirmed concerning them* in letter, and syllables, or vocal sounds, or by some means or other of conveyance. To say therefore that these are objects of faith is to say the truth, but not the whole truth; the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ revealed in the Scriptures as the way of a sinner's acceptance with God, are, properly speaking, the objects of our faith; for without such a revelation it were impossible to believe in them.

Mr. Booth, and various other writers, have considered faith in Christ as a dependence on him, a receiving him, a coming to him and trusting in him for salvation. There is no doubt but these terms are frequently used in the New Testament, to express believing." As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." "He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth in me shall never thirst." "That we should be to the praise of his glory who first trusted in Christ." "I know whom I have trusted, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day." Whether these terms, however, strictly speaking, convey the same idea as believing, may admit of a question. They seem rather to be the immediate effects of faith than faith itself. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews describes the order of these things, in what he says of the faith of Enoch: "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Here are three different exercises of mind: First, believing that God is; Secondly, believing that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him; Thirdly, coming to him: and the last is represented as the effect of the former two. The same may be applied to Christ. He that cometh to Christ must believe the gospel-testimony, that he is the Son of God, and the Saviour of sinners; the only name given under heaven, and among men, by which we must be saved: he must also believe the gospel promise, that he will bestow eternal salvation on all them that obey him; and, under the influence of this persuasion, he comes to him commits himself to him, or trusts the salvation of his soul in his hands. This process may be so quick as not to admit of the mind being conscious of it; and especially as, at such a time, it is otherwise employed than in speculating upon its own operations.

So far as it is able to recollect, the whole may appear to be one complex exercise of the soul. In this large sense also, as comprehending not only the credit of the gospel testimony, but the soul's dependence on Christ alone for acceptance with God, it is allowed that believing is necessary, not only to salvation, but to justification. We must come to Jesus that we may have life. Those who attain the blessing of justification, must seek it by faith, and not by the works of the law; submitting themselves to the righteousness of God. This blessing is constantly represented as following our union with Christ: and "he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit."*

Let it but be granted that a real belief of the gospel is not merely a matter presupposed in saving faith, but that it enters into the essence of it, and the writer of these pages will be far from contending for the exclusion of trust, or dependence. He certainly has no such objection to it as is alledged by Mr. M'Lean, that "to include, in the nature of faith, any holy exercise of the heart, affects the doctrine of justification by grace alone, without the works of the law."† If he supposed, with that author, however, that, in order to justification being wholly of grace, no holiness must precede it; or that the party must, at the time, be in a state of enmity to God, he must, to be consistent unite with him also in excluding trust (which, undoubtedly, is a holy exercise) from having any place in justifying faith; but, persuaded as he is that the freeness of justification rests upon no such ground, he is not under this necessity.

The term, trust, appears to be most appropriate, or best adapted of any, to express the confidence which the soul reposes in Christ for the fulfilment of his promises. We may credit a report of evil tidings as well as one of good; but we cannot be said to trust it. We may also credit a report, the truth or falsehood of which does not at all concern us; but that in which we place trust must be something in which our well-being is involved. The relinquishment of false confidences, which the gospel requires, and the risk which is made in embracing it, are likewise better expressed by this term than by any other. A true belief of the record which God has given of his Son is

* John v. 40. Rom. ix. 31, 32; x. 3. 1 Cor. vi. 17.
† On the Commission, p. 83.

accompanied with all this; but the term belief does not, of itself, necessarily convey it. When Jacob's sons brought the coat of many colors to him, he credited their story; he believed Joseph to be torn to pieces; but he could not be said to trust that he was. When the same persons, on their return from Egypt, declared that Joseph was yet alive, Jacob, at first believed them not; but, on seeing the wagons, he was satisfied of the truth of their declaration, and trusted in it too, leaving all behind him on the ground of it.

But, whatever difference there may be between credit and trust, they agree in those particulars which affect the point at issue: the one, no less than the other, has relation to revealed truth as its foundation. In some cases it directly refers to the divine veracity; as in Psalm cxix. 42, I trust in thy word. And where the immediate reference is to the power, the wisdom, or the mercy of God, or to the righteousness of Christ, there is a remote relation to veracity; for neither the one nor the other would be objects of trust, were they not revealed in a way of promise. And, from hence, it will follow that trusting in Christ, no less than crediting his testimony, is the duty of every sinner to whom the revelation is made.

If it be asked, What ground could a sinner, who shall at last prove to have no interest in the salvation of Christ, ever possess for trusting in him? let it be considered what it was for which he was warranted, or obliged, to trust. Was it that Christ would save him, whether he believed in him, or not? No: there is no such promise; but an explicit declaration of the contrary. To trust in this, therefore, would be to trust in a falsehood. That for which he ought to have trusted in him was the obtaining of mercy, in case he applied for it. For this there was a complete warrant in the gospel-declarations, as Mr. Booth, in his Glad Tidings to Perishing Sinners, has fully evinced. There are principles, in that performance, which the writer of these pages, highly as he respects the author, cannot approve. The principal subjects of his disapprobation have been pointed out, and he thinks scripturally refuted, by Mr. Scott;* but, with respect to the warrant which every sinner has to trust in Christ for salvation, Mr. B. has clearly and fully established it. I may add, if any man distrust either the power or willingness of Christ to save those that come to him, and so continue to stand at a distance, relying upon his own righteousness, or some false ground of confidence, to the rejection of him, it is criminal and inexcusable unbelief.

* See his Warrant and Nature of Faith.

Mr. Booth has (to all appearance, designedly) avoided the question Whether faith in Christ be the duty of the ungodly. The leading principle of the former part of his work, however, cannot stand upon any other ground. He contends that the gospel affords a complete warrant for the ungodly to believe in Jesus; and surely he will not affirm that sinners are at liberty either to embrace the warrant afforded them or to reject it? He defines believing in Jesus Christ "receiving him as he is exhibited in the doctrine of grace, or depending upon him only." But, if the ungodly be not obliged, as well as warranted, to do this, they are at liberty to do as the Jewish nation did, to receive him not, and to go on depending upon the works of the law for acceptance with God. In the course of his work, he describes the gospel-message as full of kind invitations, winning persuasions, importunate entreaties; and the messengers as commissioned to persuade and entreat sinners to be reconciled to God, and to regard the vicarious work of Jesus as the only ground of their justification." Pp. 36, 37, 2d ed. But how, if they should remain unreconciled, and continue to disregard the work of Christ? How, if they should, after all, make light of this "royal banquet," and prefer their farms and their merchandizes to these "plentiful provisions of divine grace?" Are they guiltless in so doing, and free from all breach of duty? I am persuaded, whatever was Mr. Booth's reason for being silent on this subject, he will not say they are.

PART II.

Arguments to prove that faith in Christ is the duty of all men who hear, or have opportunity to hear the Gospel.

What has been already advanced, on the nature of faith in Christ, may contribute to the deciding of the question whether faith be the duty of the ungodly: but, in addition to this, the Scriptures furnish abundance of positive evidence. The principal part of that which has occurred to me may be comprehended under the following propositions:

1. *Unconverted sinners are commanded, exhorted, and invited, to believe in Christ for salvation.*

It is here taken for granted that whatever God commands, exhorts, or invites us to comply with, is the duty of those to whom such language is addressed. If, therefore, saving faith be not the duty of the unconverted, we may expect never to find any addresses of this nature directed to

them in the holy Scriptures. We may expect that God will as soon require them to become angels as Christians, if the one be no more their duty than the other.

There is a phraseology suited to different periods of time. Previously to the coming of Christ, and the preaching of the gospel, we read but little of believing: but other terms, fully expressive of the thing, are found in abundance. I shall select a few examples, and accompany them with such remarks as may show them to be applicable to the subject.

Psalm ii. 11, 12. "Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling: kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little: blessed are all they that put their trust in him." The Psalm is evidently a prophecy of the resurrection and exaltation of the Messiah. Whatever reference may be had to Solomon, there are several things which are true of either him or his government; and the whole is applicable to Christ, and is plentifully applied to him in the New Testament.

The "kings and judges of the earth," who are here admonished to "serve the Lord (Messiah) with fear," and to "kiss the Son lest he be angry," are the same persons mentioned in verse 2, which words we find, in the New Testament, applied to "Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel," (Acts iv. 27:) that is, they were the enemies of Christ unregenerate sinners; and such, for any thing that appears, they lived and died.

The command of God addressed to these rulers is of a spiritual nature, including unfeigned faith in the Messiah, and sincere obedience to his authority. To "kiss the Son" is to be reconciled to him, to embrace his word and ordinances, and bow to his sceptre. To "serve him with fear, and rejoice with trembling," denote that they should not think meanly of him, on the one hand, nor hypocritically cringe to him, from a mere apprehension of his wrath, on the other; but sincerely embrace his government, and even rejoice that they had it to embrace. That which is here required of unbelievers is the very spirit which distinguishes believers, a holy fear of Christ's majesty, and a humble confidence in his mercy; taking his yoke upon them, and wearing it as their highest delight. That the object of the command was spiritual is also manifest from the threatening and the promise annexed to it, "lest ye perish from the way"—"blessed are all they that put their trust in him." It is here plainly supposed that, if they did not embrace the Son, they should perish from the way, and if they did put their trust in him, they should be blessed. The result is unconverted sinners are commanded to believe in Christ for salvation: therefore believing in Christ for salvation is their duty.

Isaiah lv. 1—7. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money: come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread; and your labor for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your souls shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. Behold I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people. Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knewest not; and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee, because of the Lord thy God, and for the holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee. Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." This is the language of invitation: but divine invitation implies an obligation to accept it; otherwise the conduct of those who "made light of" the gospel-supper, and preferred their farms and merchandize before it, had been guiltless.

The concluding verses of this passage express those things literally which the foregoing ones described metaphorically: the person invited, and the invitation, are the same in both. The thirst which they are supposed to possess does not mean a holy desire after spiritual blessings, but the natural desire of happiness which God has implanted in every bosom, and which, in wicked men, is directed not to "the sure mercies of David," but to that which "is not bread," or which has no solid satisfaction in it. The duty, to a compliance with which they are so pathetically urged, is a relinquishment of every false way, and a returning to God in His name who was given for "a witness, a leader and a commander to the people;" which is the same thing as "repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ." The encouragement held up to induce a compliance with this duty are the freeness, the substantialness, the durableness, the certainty, and the rich abundance of those blessings which as many as repent and believe the gospel shall receive. The whole passage is exceedingly explicit, as to the duty of the unconverted; neither is it possible to evade the force of it by any just or fair method of interpretation.

Jeremiah vi. 16. "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls: but they said, We will not walk therein. The persons here addressed are, beyond all doubt, ungodly men. God himself bears witness of them that "their ears were uncircumcised, and they could not hearken; for the word of the Lord was to them a reproach, and they had no delight in it." ver. 10. Yea, so hardened were they that "they were not ashamed when they had committed abomination," and so impudent that "they could not blush." ver. 15. And such, for any thing that appears, they continued; for, when they were exhorted to "walk in the good way," their answer was, "We will not walk therein." Hence, the awful threatening which follows: "Hear, O earth, behold, I will bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it." ver. 19.

The "good way," in which they were directed to walk, must have been the same as that in which the patriarchs and prophets had walked in former ages; who, we all know, lived and died in the faith of the promised Messiah. Hence our Lord with great propriety, applied the passage to himself. Matt. xi. 28. Jeremiah directed to "the old paths," and "the good way," as the only medium of finding rest to the soul: Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

We see in this passage also, as in many others, in what manner God requires sinners to use the means of grace: not by a mere attendance upon them, (which, while the end is disregarded, and the means rested in instead of it, is not using, but perverting them,) but with a sincere desire to find out the good way and to walk in it. God requires no natural impossibilities. No man is required to believe in Christ before he has opportunity of examining the evidence attending his gospel: but he ought to search into it like the noble Bereans, immediately, and with a pure intention of finding and following the good way; which, if he do, like them he will soon be found walking in it. If we teach sinners that a mere attendance on the means of grace is that use of them which God requires at their hands, and in which consists the whole of their duty, as to repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be found false witnesses for God, and deceivers of the souls of men.

The New Testament is still more explicit than the Old. Faith in Jesus Christ, even that which is accompanied with salvation, is there constantly held up as the duty of all to whom the gospel is preached.

John xii. 36. "While ye have the light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light." The persons to whom this passage was addressed were unbelievers, such as "though Jesus had done so many miracles among them, yet believed not on him;" (ver. 37;) and it appears that they continued unbelievers, for they are represented as given over to judicial blindness and hardness of heart, ver. 40. The light which they were exhorted to believe in, appears to be himself as revealed in the gospel; for thus he speaks in the context, "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth in me should not abide in darkness." And that the believing which Christ required of them was such as, had it been complied with, would have issued in their salvation, is manifest from its being added, "that ye may be the children of light;" an appellation never bestowed on any but true believers.

John vi. 29. "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." These words contain an answer to a question. The persons who asked it were men who "followed Christ for loaves," who "believed not," and who after this "walked no more with him," ver. 26, 36, 66. Christ had been rebuking them for their mercenary principles in thus following him about, and charging them, saying, "Labor not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth unto everlasting life," ver. 27. They replied by asking, "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" which was saying in effect, We have been very zealous for thee in following thee hither and thither; yet thou dost not allow that we please God: thou directest us "to labor for that which endureth unto everlasting life." What wouldst thou have us to do? what can we do? what must we do, in order to please God? To this question our Lord answers, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent: which, if it be a proper answer, is the same as saying, This is the first and greatest of all duties; and without it no other duty can be acceptable.

It has been said, in answer to the argument from this passage, "The words contain a declaration that believing in Christ for salvation is necessary to the enjoyment of eternal life, and that faith in him is an act acceptable and pleasing to God; but afford no proof that it it is required of men in a state of unregeneracy. To declare to unregenerate persons the necessity of faith in order to salvation, which is what our

blessed Lord here does, falls very far short of asserting it to be their present duty."*

We see by this answer that Mr. Brine, who will be allowed to have been one of the most judicious writers on that side the question, was fully convinced of three things. First: That the persons here addressed were unregenerate sinners. Secondly: That the faith recommended is saving. Thirdly: That when faith is here called the work of God it does not mean the work which God performs, but an act of theirs, which would be acceptable and pleasing to him. Yet we are told that our Lord merely expresses the necessity of it, without asserting it to be their present duty. Was it not the object of their inquiry then, What was their present duty, or what they ought to do in order to please God? What else can be made of it? Further: How can our Lord be supposed in answer to their question to tell them of an act which was necessary, acceptable, and pleasing to God but which was not their present duty? Is such an answer worthy of him? Nay, how could their believing be an act acceptable and pleasing to God, if it were not their present duty? God is pleased with that only in us which he requires at our hands.

John v. 23. "The Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father which hath sent him." That men are obliged to honor the Father by a holy hearty love to him, and adoration of him under every character by which he has manifested himself, will be allowed by all except the grossest Antinomians: and, if it be the will of the Father that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father, nothing less can be required of them than a holy, hearty love to him, and adoration of him under every character by which he has manifested himself. But such a regard to Christ necessarily supposes faith in him; for it is impossible to honor him, while we reject him in all or any of his offices, and neglect his great salvation. To honor an infallible teacher is to place an implicit and unbounded confidence in all he says: to honor an advocate is to commit our cause to him: to honor a physician is to trust our lives in his hands: and to honor a king is to bow to his sceptre, and cheerfully obey his laws. These are characters under which Christ has manifested himself. To treat him in this manner is to honor him; and to treat him otherwise is to dishonor him.

The Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament abound with exhortations to hear the word of God, to hearken to his counsel, to wait on him, to seek his favor, &c., all which imply saving faith. "Hearken unto me, O ye children; for blessed are they that keep my ways. Hear instruction and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me, findeth life, and shall obtain favor of the Lord. But he that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own soul. All they that hate me love death!" "How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn ye at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you." "Hear, ye deaf, and look, ye blind, that ye may see. Hearken dilligently unto me. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live." "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near." "This is my beloved Son: hear him." "And it shall come to pass that every soul which will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people." "Labor not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth unto everlasting life."

It is a grievous misapplication of such language to consider it as expressive of a mere attendance upon the means of grace, without any spiritual desire after God; and to allow that unregenerate sinners comply with it. Nothing can be farther from the truth. The Scriptures abound in promises of spiritual and eternal blessings to those who thus hearken, hear and seek after God: such exercises, therefore, must of necessity be spiritual, and require to be understood as including faith in Christ. The Scriptures exhort to no such exercises as may be complied with by a mind at enmity with God: the duties which they inculcate are all spiritual, and no sinner while unregenerate is supposed to comply with them. So far from allowing that ungodly men seek after God, or do any good thing, they expressly declare the contrary. "God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God. Every one of them is gone back; they are altogether become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one." To reduce the exhortations of Scripture to the level of a carnal mind is to betray the authority of God over the human heart; and to allow that unconverted sinners comply with them is to be aiding and abetting in their self deception. The unconverted who attend the means of grace, generally persuade themselves, and wish to persuade others, that they would gladly be converted and be real Christians, if it were but in their power. They imagine themselves to be waiting at the pool

* Mr. Brine's motives to Love and Unity. &c., p. 12.

for the moving of the water, and therefore feel no guilt on account of their present state of mind. Doubtless, they are willing and desirous to escape the wrath to come; and, under certain convictions, would submit to relinquish many things, and to comply with other things, as the condition of it; but they have no direct desire after spiritual blessings. If they had, they would seek them in the name of Jesus, and, thus seeking, would find them. That preaching therefore, which exhorts them to mere outward duties, and tells them that their only concern is, in this manner to wait at the pool, helps forward their delusion, and should they perish will prove accessory to their destruction.

Simon the sorceror was admonished to "repent, and pray to the Lord, if perhaps the thought of his heart might be forgiven him." From this express example many, who are averse from the doctrine here defended, have been so far convinced as to acknowledge that it is the duty of the unconverted to pray, at least for temporal blessings; but Simon was not admonished to pray for temporal blessings, but for the forgiveness of sin. Neither was he to pray in a carnal and heartless manner; but to repent, and pray. And, being directed to repent, and pray for the forgiveness of sin, he was, in effect, directed to believe in Jesus; for in what other name could forgiveness be expected? Peter, after having declared to the Jewish rulers that there was none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved, cannot be supposed to have directed Simon to hope for forgiveness in any other way.

To admonish any person to pray, or to seek the divine favor, in any other way than by faith in Jesus Christ, is the same thing as to admonish him to follow the example of Cain, and of the self-righteous Jews. Cain was not averse from worship. He brought his offering; but, having no sense of the evil of sin, and of the need of a Saviour, he had taken no notice of what had been revealed concerning the promised seed, and paid no regard to the presenting of an expiatory sacrifice. He thanked God for temporal blessings, and might pray for their continuance; but this was not doing well. It was practically saying to his Maker, I have done nothing to deserve being made a sacrifice to thy displeasure; and I see no necessity for any sacrifice being offered up, either now or at the end of the world. In short, it was claiming to approach God merely as a creature, and as though nothing had taken place which required an atonement. The self-righteous Jews did not live without religion: they followed after the law of righteousness; yet they did not attain it: and wherefore? "because they sought it not by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law; for they stumbled at that stumbling-stone." And shall we direct our hearers to follow this example, by exhorting them to pray, and seek the divine favor in any other way than by faith in Jesus Christ? If so, how can we deserve the name of Christian ministers?

The Scriptures exhort sinners to put their trust in the Lord, and censure them for placing it in an arm of flesh. Whether trusting in Christ, for the salvation of our souls, be distinguishable from believing in him, or not, it certainly includes it. To trust in Christ is to believe in him: if, therefore, the one be required, the other must be. Those who "loved vanity, and sought after lying," are admonished to offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and to put their trust in the Lord: and a trust connected with the sacrifices of righteousness must be spiritual. To rely on any other object is to "trust in vanity," against which sinners are repeatedly warned: "Trust not in oppression; become not vain in robbery." "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord."

It is allowed that if God had never sent his Son into the world to save sinners, or if the invitations of the gospel were not addressed to sinners indefinitely, there would be no warrant for trust in the divine mercy: and, as it is, there is no warrant for trust beyond what God has promised in his word. He has not promised to save sinners indiscriminately, and therefore it would be presumption in sinners indiscriminately to trust that they shall be saved. But he has promised, and that in great variety of language, that whosoever, relinquishing every false ground of hope, shall come to Jesus as a perishing sinner, and rely on him alone for salvation, shall not be disappointed. For such a reliance, therefore, there is a complete warrant. These promises are true, and will be fulfilled, whether we trust in them or not: and whosoever still continues to trust in his own righteousness, or in the general mercy of his Creator, without respect to the atonement, refusing to build upon the foundation which God has laid in Zion, is guilty of the greatest of all sins; and, if God give him not repentance to the acknowledgement of the truth, the stone which he has refused will fall upon him, and grind him to powder.

But, "until a man through the law is dead to the law," says Mr. Brine, "he hath no warrant to receive Christ as a Saviour, or to hope for salvation through him."*

* Motives to Love and Unity, pp. 33, 39.

If, by receiving Christ, were meant the claiming an interest in the blessings of his salvation, this objection would be well founded. No man, while adhering to his own righteousness as the ground of acceptance with God, has any warrant to conclude himself interested in the righteousness of Jesus. The Scriptures every where assure him of the contrary. But the question is, Does he need any warrant to be dead to the law; or, which is the same thing, to relinquish his vain hopes of acceptance by the works of it, and to choose that Rock for his foundation which is chosen of God and precious? To "receive" Christ, in the sense of Scripture, stands opposed to rejecting him, or to such a non-reception of him as was practised by the body of the Jewish nation. John i. 11, 12. An interest in spiritual blessings, and, of course, a persuasion of it, is represented as following the reception of Christ, and, consequently, is to be distinguished from it. "To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." The idea that is generally attached to the term, in various cases to which the reception of Christ bears an allusion, corresponds with the above statement. To receive a gift is not to believe it to be my own, though, after I have received it, it is so; but to have my pride so far abased as not to be above it, and my heart so much attracted as to be willing to relinquish every thing that stands in competition with it. To receive a guest is not to believe him to be my particular friend, though such he may be; but to open my doors to him, and make him heartily welcome. To receive an instructor is not to believe him to be my instructor any more than another's; but to embrace his instruction, and follow his counsel. For a town, or city, after a long siege, to receive a king, is not to believe him to be their special friend, though such he may be, and, in the end, they may see it; but to lay down their arms, throw open their gates, and come under his government. These remarks are easily applied; and it is no less easy to perceive that every sinner has not only a warrant thus to receive Christ, but that it is his great sin, if he receive him not.

II. *Every man is bound cordially to receive and approve whatever God reveals.*

It may be presumed that, if God reveal any thing to men, it will be accompanied with such evidence of its being what it is, that no upright mind can continue to doubt of it. "He that is of God, heareth God's words."

It will be allowed, by those with whom I am now reasoning, that no man is justifiable in disbelieving the truth of the gospel, or in positively rejecting it: but then it is supposed that a belief of the gospel is not saving faith; and that, though a positive rejection of divine truth is sinful, yet a spiritual reception of it is not a duty. I hope it has been made to appear, in the former part of this piece, that a real belief of the doctrine of Christ is saving faith, and includes such a cordial acquiescence in the way of salvation as has the promise of eternal life. But, be this as it may, whether the belief of the gospel be allowed to include a cordial acquiescence in God's way of salvation or not, such an acquiescence will be allowed to include saving faith. "Acting faith," says Mr. Brine, "is no other than suitable thoughts of Christ, and a hearty choice of him as God's appointed way of salvation."* If, therefore, it can be proved that a cordial approbation of God's way of saving sinners is the duty of every one, it will amount to proving the same thing of saving faith.

I allow there is a difficulty in this part of the work; but it is that which attends the proof of a truth which is nearly self-evident. Who could suppose that Mr. Brine, after such an acknowledgment concerning faith, could doubt of its being the duty of all mankind? Ought we not, if we think of Christ at all, to think suitably of him? and are we justifiable in entertaining low and unsuitable thoughts of him? Is it not a matter of complaint that the ungodly Jews saw "no form nor comeliness in him, nor beauty, that they should desire him?" And with respect to a hearty choice of him, as God's appointed way of salvation, if it be not the duty of sinners to choose him, it is their duty to refuse him, or to desire to be accepted of God by the works of their hands, in preference to him? Mr. Brine would censure men for this. So does Mr. Wayman. Speaking of self-righteous unbelievers, he says, "They plainly declare that Christ is not all and in all to them, but that he comes in but at second-hand; and their regard is more unto themselves, and their dependence more upon their own doings, than upon the Mighty One upon whom God hath laid our help."† But why thus complain of sinners for their not choosing Christ, if they be under no obligation to do so? Is there no sin in the invention of the various false schemes of religion, with which the Christian world abounds, to the exclusion of Christ? Why, then, are heresies reckoned among the works of the flesh? Gal. v. 20. If we are not obliged to think suitably of Christ, and to choose him whom the Lord and all good men have chosen, there can be no evil in these things; for, where no law is, there is no transgression.

* Johnson's Mistakes Noted and Rectified, p. 34.
† Further Inquiry, p. 160.

"A hearty choice of God's appointed way of salvation" is the same thing as falling in with its grand designs. Now, the grand designs of the salvation of Christ are the glory of God, the abasement of the sinner, and the destruction of his sins. It is God's manifest purpose, in saving sinners, to save them in this way: and can any sinner be excused from cordially acquiescing in it? If any man properly regard the character of God, he must be willing that he should be glorified: if he knew his own unworthiness, as he ought to know it, he must also be willing to occupy that place which the gospel way of salvation assigns him: and, if he be not wickedly wedded to his lusts, he must be willing to sacrifice them at the foot of the cross. He may be averse from each of these, and, while an unbeliever, is so: but he will not be able to acquit himself of guilt; and it is to be lamented that any who sustain the character of Christian ministers should be employed in laboring to acquit him.

If a way of salvation were provided which did not provide for the glory of God, which did not abase, but flatter the sinner, and which did not require him to sacrifice his lusts, he would feel no want of power to embrace it. Nominal Christians, and mere professors, in all ages, have shown themselves able to believe any thing but the truth. Thus it was with the carnal Jews; and thus our Lord plainly told them: "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive." "Because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not. Which of you convinceth me of sin? And, if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God, heareth God's words: ye, therefore, hear them not, because ye are not of God." This is the true source of the innumerable false schemes of religion in the world, and the true reason why the gospel is not universally embraced.

Unbelievers are described as "disallowing" of him who is "chosen of God and precious." Now either to allow or disallow, supposes a claim. Christ claims to be the whole foundation of a sinner's hope; and God claims, on his behalf, that he be treated as "the head of the corner." But the heart of unbelievers cannot allow of the claim. The Jewish builders set him at nought; and every self-righteous heart follows their example. God, to express his displeasure at this conduct, assures them that their unbelief shall affect none but themselves; it shall not deprive the Saviour of his honors; "for the stone which they refuse," notwithstanding their opposition, "shall become the head of the corner." What can be made of all this, but that they ought to have allowed him the place which he so justly claimed, and to have chosen him whom the Lord had chosen? On no other ground could the Scripture censure them as it does; and on no other principle could they be characterized as disobedient; for all disobedience consists in a breach of duty.

Believers, on the other hand, are described as thinking highly of Christ; reckoning themselves unworthy to "unloose the latchets of his shoes," or that he should "come under their roof;" treating his gospel as "worthy of all acceptation," and "counting all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of him." They are of the same mind with the blessed above, who sing his praise, "saying with a loud voice, *Worthy* is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." In fine, they are of the same mind with God himself; him whom God has chosen they choose; and he that is precious in his sight is precious in theirs. 1 Pet. ii. 4—7. And do they over-estimate his character? Is he not worthy of all the honor they ascribe to him, of all the affection they exercise towards him; and that whether he actually receive it or not? If all the angels had been of the mind of Satan, and all the saints of the spirit of the unbelieving Israelites, who were not gathered; yet would he have been "glorious in the eyes of the Lord." The belief or unbelief of creatures makes no difference as to his worthiness, or their obligation to ascribe it to him.

It is allowed by all, except the grossest Antinomians, that every man is obliged to love God with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength; and this notwithstanding the depravity of his nature. But to love God with all the heart is to love him in every character in which he has made himself known; and, more especially in those wherein his moral excellences appear with the brightest lustre. The same law that obliged Adam in innocence to love God in all his perfections, as displayed in the works of creation, obliged Moses and Israel to love him in all the glorious displays of himself in his wonderful works of providence, of which they were witnesses. And the same law that obliged them to love him in those discoveries of himself obliges us to love him in other discoveries, by which he has since more gloriously appeared, as saving sinners through the death of his Son. To suppose that we are obliged to love God as manifesting himself in the works of creation and providence, but not in the work of redemption, is to suppose that in the highest and most glorious display of himself he deserves no regard. The same perfections which appear in all his other works, and render

him lovely, appear in this with a tenfold lustre; to be obliged to love him on account of the one, and not of the other, is not a little extraordinary.

As these things cannot be separated in point of obligation, so neither can they in fact. He that loves God for any excellency, as manifested in one form, must of necessity love him for that excellency, let it be manifested in what form it may; and the brighter the display the stronger will be his love. This remark is verified in the holy angels. At first they loved their Maker for what they saw in his works of creation. They saw him lay the foundation of the earth, and they "*Shouted for joy.*" In process of time they witnessed the glorious displays of his moral character in the government of the world which he had made: and now their love increases. On every new occasion, they cry "*Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.*" At length, they beheld an event to the accomplishment of which all former events were subservient: they saw the Messiah born in Bethlehem. And now their love rises still higher. As though heaven could not contain them on such an occasion, they resort to the place, and contemplate the good that should arise to the moral system, bursting forth into a song: "*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men.*" All this was but the natural operation of love to God: and, from the same principle, they took delight in attending the Redeemer through his life, strengthening him in his sufferings, watching at his tomb, conducting him to glory, and looking into the mysteries of redemption. With a heart like theirs, is it possible to conceive that we should continue impenitent or unbelieving? If, in our circumstances, we possessed that love to God by which they were influenced, it would melt us into holy lamentation for having sinned against him. If the gospel invitation to partake of the water of life once sounded in our ears, we should instantly imbibe it. Instead of making "light of it," and preferring our "farms" and our "merchandize" before it, we should embrace it with our whole heart. Let any creature be affected towards God as the holy angels are, and if he had a thousand souls to be saved, and the invitations extended to every one that is willing, he would not hesitate a moment whether he should rely on his salvation. It is owing to a want of love to God that any man continues impenitent or unbelieving. This was plainly intimated by our Lord to the Jews: "I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you. I am come in my Fathers name, and ye receive me not." It is impossible to love God, and not to embrace the greatest friend of God that ever existed; or to love his law, and not approve of a system which above all things tends to magnify and make it honorable.

"The affections included in divine love," says an able writer, "are founded on those truths for which there is the greatest evidence in the world. Every thing in the world that proves the being of God proves that his creatures should love him with all their hearts. The evidence for all these things is in itself very strong, and level to every capacity. Where it does not beget conviction, it is not owing to the weakness of men's capacities; but the strength of their prejudices and prepossessions. Whatever proves that reasonable creatures are obliged to love God and his law proves that sinners are obliged to exercise a suitable hatred of sin, and abasement for it. A sinner cannot have due prevalent love to God, and hatred of sin, without prevalent desire of obtaining deliverance from sin, and the enjoyment of God. A suitable desire of ends so important cannot be without proportionable desire of the necessary means. If a sinner, therefore, who hears the gospel have these suitable affections of love to God, and hatred of sin, to which he is obliged by the laws of natural religion, these things cannot be separated from a real complacency in that redemption and grace which are proposed in revealed religion. This does not suppose that natural religion can discover, or prove, the peculiar things of the gospel to be true: but, when they are discovered, it proves them to be infinitely desirable. A book of laws that are enforced with awful sanctions cannot prove that the sovereign has passed an act of grace or indemnity in favor of transgressors: but it proves that such favor is to them the most desirable and the most necessary thing in the world. It proves that the way of saving us from sin which the gospel reveals is infinitely suitable to the honor of God, to the dignity of his law, and to the exigences of the consciencies of sinners."*

"If any man has a taste for moral excellency," says another, "a heart to account God glorious for being what he is, he cannot but see the moral excellency of the law, and love it and conform to it, because it is image of God; and so he cannot but see the moral excellency of the gospel, and believe it, and love it, and comply with it; for it is also the image of God: he that can see the moral beauty in the original cannot but see the moral beauty of the image drawn to life. He, therefore, that despises the gospel, and is an enemy to the law, even he is at enmity against God himself. Rom. viii. 7. Ignorance of the glory of

* M'Laurin's Essay on Grace, 332.

God, and enmity against him, make men ignorant of the glory of the law and of the gospel, and enemies to both. Did men know and "love him that begat, they would love that which is begotten of him.' 1 John v. 1. 'He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God. John viii. 47."*

III. *Though the gospel, strictly speaking, is not a law, but a message of pure grace; yet it virtually requires obedience, and such an obedience as includes saving faith.*

It is no uncommon thing to distinguish between a formal requisition and that which affords the ground, or reason of that requisition. The goodness of God, for instance, though it is not a law or formal precept, yet virtually requires a return of gratitude. It deserves it; and the law of God formally requires it on his behalf. Thus it is with respect to the gospel, which is the greatest overflow of divine goodness that was ever witnessed. A return suitable to its nature is required virtually by the gospel itself; and formally by the divine precept on its behalf.

I suppose it might be taken for granted that the gospel possesses some degree of virtual authority; as it is generally acknowledged that, by reason of the dignity of its author and the importance of its subject-matter, it deserves the audience and attention of all mankind: yea more that all mankind who have opportunity of hearing it are obliged to believe it. The only question therefore is whether the faith which it requires be spiritual, or such as has the promise of salvation.

We may form some idea of the manner in which the gospel ought to be received, from its being represented as an embassy. "We are ambassadors for Christ," saith the apostle, "as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." The object of an embassy, in all cases, is peace. Ambassadors are sometimes employed between friendly powers for the adjustment of their affairs; but the allusion, in this case, is manifestly to a righteous prince, who should condescend to speak peaceably to his rebellious subjects, and, as it were, to entreat them for their own sakes to be reconciled. The language of the apostle supposes that the world is engaged in an unnatural and unprovoked rebellion against its Maker; that it is in his power utterly to destroy sinners; that, if, he were to deal with them according to their deserts, this must be their portion: but that, through the mediation of his Son, he had, as it were, suspended hostilities, had sent his servants with words of peace and commissioned them to persuade, to entreat, and even to beseech them to be reconciled. But reconciliation to God includes every thing that belongs to true conversion. It is the opposite of a state of alienation and enmity to him. Col. i. 21. It includes a justification of his government, a condemnation of their own unprovoked rebellion against him, and a thankful reception of the message of peace; which is the same for substance as to repent and believe the gospel. To speak of an embassy from the God of heaven and earth to his rebellious creatures being entitled to nothing more than an audience, or a decent attention, must itself be highly offensive to the honor of his majesty; and that such language should proceed from his professed friends must render it still more so.

"When the apostle beseecheth us to be 'reconciled' to God, I would know," says Dr. Owen, "whether it be not a part of our duty to yield obedience? If not, the exhortation is frivolous and vain."* If sinners are not obliged to be to God, both as a law-giver and a Saviour, and that with all their hearts, it is no sin to be unreconciled. All the enmity of their hearts to God, his law, his gospel, or his Son, must be guiltless. For there can be no neutrality in this case: not to be reconciled is to be unreconciled; not to fall in with the message of peace is to fall out with it; and not to lay down arms and submit to mercy is to maintain the war.

It is in perfect harmony with the foregoing ideas that those who acquiesce in the way of salvation, in this spiritual manner are represented, in so doing, as exercising *obedience;* as "obeying the gospel," "obeying the truth," and "obeying Christ." Rom. x. 16; vi. 17. The very end of the gospel being preached is said to be for "obedience to the faith among all nations." Rom. i. 5. But obedience supposes previous obligation. If repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ were not duties required of us, even prior to all consideration of their being blessings bestowed upon us, it were incongruous to speak of them as exercises of obedience. Nor would it be less so to speak of that impenitence and unbelief which expose men to "eternal destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power," as consisting in their not obeying the gospel. 2 Thess. i. 8, 9. The passage on which the former part of this argument is founded, (viz. 2 Cor. v. 19, 20,) has been thought inapplicable to the subject, because it is supposed to be an address to the members of the

* Bellamy's True Religion Delineated, p. 332.

* Display of Arminianism. Chap. x.

Church at Corinth, who were considered by the apostle as believers. On this principle Dr. Gill expounds the reconciliation exhorted to, submission to providence, and obedience to the discipline and ordinances of God. But let it be considered whether the apostle be here immediately addressing the members of the church at Corinth, beseeching them, at that time, to be reconciled to God; or whether he be not rather rehearsing to them what had been his conduct, and that of his brethren in the ministry, in vindication of himself and them from the base insinuations of false teachers; to whom the great evils that had crept into that church had been principally owing. The methods they appear to have taken to supplant the apostles were those of underhand insinuation. By Paul's answers, they appear to have suggested that he and his friends were either subtle men, who, by their soft and beseeching style, ingratiated themselves into the esteem of the simple, catching them, as it were, with guile, (2 Cor. i. 12; xii. 16;) or weak-headed enthusiasts, "beside themselves," (chap. v. 13,) going up and down "beseeching" people to this and that, (chap. xi. 21;)and that, as to Paul himself, however great he might appear in his "letters," he was nothing in company; "His bodily presence, say they, is weak, and his speech contemptible."

In the First Epistle to this church, Paul generously waved a defence of himself and his brethren; being more concerned for the recovery of those to Christ who were in danger of being drawn off from the truth as it is in Jesus, than respecting their opinion of him: yet when the one was accomplished, he undertook the other; not only as a justification of himself and his brethren, but as knowing that just sentiments of faithful ministers bore an intimate connexion with the spiritual welfare of their hearers. It is thus that the apostle alludes to their various insinuations, acknowledging that they did indeed beseech, entreat, and persuade men; but affirming that such conduct arose not from the motives of which they were accused, but from the "love of Christ." "If we are beside ourselves, it is for your sakes."

If the words in chap. v. 19, 20, be an immediate address to the members of the church at Corinth, those which follow, in chap. vi. 1, must be an address to its ministers; and thus Dr. Gill expounds it. But, if so, the apostle in the continuation of that address would not have said, as he does, "In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God: his language would have been, "in all things approving yourselves," &c. Hence it is manifest that the whole is a vindication of their preaching and and manner of life against the insinuations of the Corinthian teachers.

There are two things which may have contributed to the misunderstanding of this passage of Scripture, one is the supplement *you*, which is unnecessarily introduced three times over in chap. v. 20, and vi. 1. If any supplement had been necessary, the word men, as it is in the text of chap. v. 11, might have better conveyed the apostle's meaning. The other is the division of the fifth and sixth chapters in the midst of the argument.*

IV. *The want of faith in Christ is ascribed in the Scriptures to men's depravity, and is itself represented as a heinous sin.*

It is taken for granted that whatever is not a sinners duty, the omission of it cannot be charged on him as a sin, nor imputed to any depravity in him. If faith were no more a duty than election or redemption, which are acts peculiar to God, the want of the one would be no more ascribed to the evil dispositions of the heart than that of the other. Or, if the inability of sinners to believe in Christ were of the same nature as that of a dead body in a grave to rise up and walk, it were absurd to suppose that they would on this account fall under the divine censure. No man is reproved for not doing that which is naturally impossible; but sinners are reproved for not believing, and given to understand that it is solely owing to their criminal ignorance, pride, dishonesty of heart, and aversion from God

Voluntary ignorance is represented as a reason why sinners believe not. "Being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, they have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." To the same purpose we are taught by our Lord in the parable of the sower, "when any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart;" and this as Luke expresses it, "lest they should believe and be saved."

If men, even though they were possessed of the same principles as our first father in paradise, would nevertheless be blind to the glory of the gospel, with what propriety is their blindness attributed to the god of this world? Is he ever represented as employing himself in hindering that which is nat-

* See Dr. Guyse on the place.

urally impossible, or in promoting that which is innocent?

Pride is another cause to which the want of saving faith is ascribed, "The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek." "God is not in all his thoughts." We have seen already that seeking God is a spiritual exercise, which implies faith in the Mediator: and the reason why ungodly men are strangers to it is the haughtiness of their spirits, which makes them scorn to take the place of supplicants before their offended Creator, and labor to put far from their minds every thought of him. "How can ye believe," said our Lord to the Jews, "who receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?"

If believing were here to be taken for any other faith than that which is spiritual or saving, the suggestion would not hold good; for we are told of some who could and did believe in Christ, in some sense, but who did not confess him; for they "loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." John xii. 43. It was pride that blinded the minds of the "wise and prudent of this world" to the doctrines of Christ; and what is it but this same proud spirit, working in a way of self-conceit and self-righteousness, that still forms the grand objection to the doctrine of salvation by mere grace?

Dishonesty of heart is that on account of which men receive not the word of God, so as to bring forth fruit. This is fully implied in the parable of the sower, recorded in the eighth chapter of Luke. The reason why those hearers represented by the good ground received the word, and brought forth fruit rather than the others, was that they had "good and honest hearts;" plainly intimating that the reason why the others did not so receive it was that their hearts were not upright before God. Indeed, such is the nature of divine truth that every heart which is honest towards God must receive it. An honest heart must needs approve of God's holy law, which requires us to love him with all our powers; and this because it is no more than giving him the glory due to his name. An honest heart will approve of being justified wholly for Christ's sake, and not on account of any of its own works, whether legal or evangelical; for it is no more than relinquishing a claim which is justly forfeited, and accepting as a free gift that which God was under no obligation to bestow. Farther: An honest heart must rejoice in the way of salvation as soon as he understands it; because it provides a way in which mercy can be exercised consistently with righteousness. A right spirit would revolt at the idea of receiving mercy itself in a way that should leave a blot upon the divine character. It is the glory of Christ that he has not an honest man for an enemy. The upright love him.

We are not ignorant who it is that must now give men honest hearts, and what is the source of every thing in a fallen creature that is truly good; but this does not effect the argument. However far sinners are from it, and whatever divine agency it may require to produce it, no man who is not disposed to deny the accountableness of creatures to the God that made them will deny that it is their duty; for, if we are not obliged to be upright towards God, we are obliged to nothing; and, if obliged to nothing, we must be guiltless, and so stand in no need of salvation.

Finally: Aversion of heart is assigned as a reason why sinners do not believe. This truth is strongly expressed in that complaint of our Lord in John v. 40, "Ye will not, or ye are not willing, to come unto me, that ye might have life." Proudly attached to their own righteousness, when Jesus exhibited himself as "the way, the truth, and the life," they were stumbled at it; and thousands in the religious world are the same to this day. They are willing to escape God's wrath, and to gain his favor; yea, and to relinquish many an outward vice in order to it: but to come to Jesus among the chief of sinners, and be indebted wholly to his sacrifice for life, they are not willing. Yet, can any man plead that this their unwillingness is innocent?

Mr. Hussey understands the foregoing passage of barely owning Christ to be the Messiah, which, he says, would have saved them as a nation from temporal ruin and death; or, as he in another place expresses it, "from having their brains dashed out by the battering rams of Titus," the Roman general.* But it ought to be observed that the life for which they were "not willing" to come to him was the same as that which they thought they had in the Scriptures; and this was "eternal" life. "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me:" and "ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life." This was the same as saying, these very Scriptures, in which ye think ye have eternal life, testify of me, as the only way to it; but such is the pride and aversion of your hearts that ye will not come to me for it.

Dr. Gill, in general, opposed these principles; yet frequently, when his system was out of sight, he established them. His exposition of this passage is a proof of this remark. He tells us that the "perverseness of their wills was blame-worthy, being

* Glory of Christ Revealed, pp. 527, 615.

owing to the corruption and vitiosity of their nature; which being blame-worthy in them, that which follows upon it must be so too."

There is no inconsistency between this account of things and that which is given elsewhere, that "no man can come to Christ, except the Father draw him." No man can choose that from which his heart is averse. It is common, both in Scripture and in conversation, to speak of a person who is under the influence of an evil bias of heart, as unable to do that which is inconsistent with it. "They have eyes full of adultery, and cannot cease from sin." "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."

On account of this different phraseology, some writers have affirmed that men are under both a moral and natural inability of coming to Christ; or that they neither will nor can come to him: but, if there be no other inability than what arises from aversion, this language is not accurate; for it conveys the idea that, if all aversion of heart were removed, there would still be a natural and insurmountable bar in the way. But no such idea as this is conveyed by our Lord's words: the only bar to which he refers lies in that reluctance or aversion which the drawing of the Father implies and removes. Nor will such an idea comport with what he elsewhere teaches. "And, because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not. Which of you convinceth me of sin? And, if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God. Why do ye not understand my speech? Because ye cannot hear my word." These cutting interrogations proceed on the supposition that they could have received the doctrine of Christ, if it had been agreeable to their corrupt hearts; and its being otherwise was the *only* reason why they could not understand and believe it. If sinners were naturally and absolutely unable to believe in Christ, they would be equally unable to disbelieve; for it requires the same powers to reject as to embrace. And, in this case, there would be no room for an inability of another kind: a dead body is equally unable to do evil as to do good; and a man naturally and absolutely blind could not be guilty of shutting his eyes against the light. "It is indwelling sin," as Dr. Owen says, "that both disenableth men unto, and hinders them from believing, and that alone. Blindness of mind, stubbornness of the will, sensuality of the affections, all concur to keep poor perishing souls at a distance from Christ. Men are made blind by sin, and cannot see his excellency; obstinate, and will not lay hold of his righteousness; senseless, and take no notice of their eternal concernments."*

A voluntary and judicial blindness, obstinacy, and hardness of heart, are represented as the bar to conversion. Acts xxviii. 27. But if that spirit which is exercised in conversion were essentially different from any thing which the subjects of it in any state possessed, or ought to have possessed, it were absurd to ascribe the want of it to such cases.

Those who embraced the gospel and submitted to the government of the Messiah were baptized with the baptism of John, and are said, in so doing, to have "justified" God: their conduct was an acknowledgement of the justice of the law, and of the wisdom and love of the gospel. On the other hand, those who did not thus submit are said to have "rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized." Luke vii. 29, 30. But no Christian, I suppose, (certainly no Baptist,) thinks it was their sin not to be baptized while they continued enemies to Christ; and probably very few, if any, serious Pædobaptists would contend for its being the duty of adults to be baptized in Christ's name, without first embracing his word. How then can this passage be understood, but by supposing that they ought to have repented of their sins, embraced the Messiah, and submitted to his ordinances? Nor can the force of the argument be evaded by distinguishing between different kinds of repentance and faith; for a profession of true repentance, and of faith unfeigned, was required in order to baptism.

Finally; Unbelief is expressly declared to be a sin of which the Spirit of truth has to convince the world. John xvi. 8, 9. But unbelief cannot be a sin if faith were not a duty. I know of no answer to this argument, but what must be drawn from a distinction between believing the report of the gospel and saving faith; allowing the want of the one to be sinful, but not of the other. But it is not of gross unbelief only, or of an open rejection of Jesus as the Messiah that the Holy Spirit has to convince the world; nor is it to a bare conviction of this truth, like what prevails in all Christian countries, that men are brought by his teaching. When he, the Spirit of truth, cometh, his operations are deeper than this amounts to: it is of an opposition of heart to the way of salvation that he convinces the sinner, and to a cordial acquiescence with it that he brings him. Those who are born in a Christian land, and who never were the subjects of gross infidelity stand in no less need of being thus convinced

* On Indwelling Sin. Chap. xiv.

than others. Nay, in some respects they need it more. Their unbelieving opposition to Christ is more subtle, refined, and out of sight, than that of open infidels: they are no less apt, therefore, to suspect themselves of it; and consequently stand in greater need of the Holy Spirit to search them out, and show them to themselves. Amongst those who constantly sit under the gospel, and who remain in an unconverted state, there are few who think themselves the enemies of Christ. On the contrary, they flatter themselves that they are willing at any time to be converted, if God would but convert them; considering themselves as lying at the pool for the moving of the waters. But "when he, the Spirit of truth, cometh," these coverings will be stripped from off the face, and these refuges of lies will fail.*

V. *God has threatened and inflicted the most awful punishments on sinners, for their not believing on the Lord Jesus Christ.*

It is here taken for granted that nothing but sin can be the cause of God's inflicting punishment: and nothing can be sin which is not a breach of duty.

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." This awful passage appears to be a kind of ultimatum, or last resolve. It is as if our Lord had said, this is your message—go and proclaim it to all nations: whosoever receives it, and submits to my authority, assure him from me that eternal salvation awaits him: but whosoever rejects it let him see to it—damnation shall be his portion! Believing and not believing, in this passage, serve to explain each other. It is saving faith to which salvation is promised, and to the want of this it is that damnation is threatened.

It has been alleged that, "as it is not inferable from that declaration that the faith of believers is the procuring cause of their salvation, so it is not to be inferred from thence that the want of that special faith in unbelievers is the procuring cause of their damnation. That declaration contains in it the descriptive characters of those who are saved, and of those who are damned; but it assigns not special faith to be the procuring cause of the salvation of the former, nor the want of it to be the procuring cause of the damnation of the latter."†

But, if this mode of reasoning were admitted, we should find it very difficult, if not impossible, to prove any thing to be evil from the threatenings of God against it. A multitude of plain texts of Scripture, wherein sin, as any common reader would suppose, is threatened with punishment, might, in this manner, be made to teach nothing with regard to its being the procuring cause of it. For example, Ps. xxxvii. 18, 20: "The Lord knoweth the days of the upright; and their inheritance shall be forever. But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away." But it might be said, as the uprightness of the upright is not the procuring cause of his enjoying an everlasting inheritance, so neither will this prove that the wickedness of the wicked, or the enmity of the Lord's enemies, is the procuring cause of their being consumed. Again, Ps. cxlvii. 6: "The Lord lifteth up the meek; he casteth the wicked down to the ground." But it might be alleged that as the meekness of the former is not the procuring cause of his being lifted up, so it cannot be from hence inferred that the wickedness of the latter is the procuring cause of his being cast down. Again, Ps. cxlv. 20: "The Lord preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy." But it might be said, as the love of the one is not the procuring cause of his preservation, so it cannot be proved from hence that the wickedness of the other is the procuring cause of his destruction; and that these declarations contain only the "descriptive characters" of those who are saved, and of those who perish.

In this manner almost all the threatenings in the book of God might be made to say nothing as threatenings; for the mode in which they are delivered is the same as that in the passage in question. For example, "What shall be given unto thee? or what shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue? Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper." "He that showeth no mercy shall have judgment without mercy." "Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." "Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor theives, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." "Behold the day cometh that shall burn like an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble." "Bring hither those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, and slay them before me." "The fearful and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their portion in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." But none of these awful threatenings declare that the

*See Charnock's excellent discourse, on Unbelief the Greatest Sin, from the above passage. Vol. II. of his Works.

†Mr. Brine's Motives to Love and Unity, pp. 31, 32.

respective crimes which are mentioned are the procuring cause of the evils denounced. Though it is said, concerning the "false tongue," that "sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper," shall be given him; yet it does not say that these shall be given him because of his falsehood: and so on of the rest. And thus they may be only "descriptive characters" of those who shall be damned; and all these things may, for aught these denunciations prove, be blameless. If this reasoning be just, it cannot be inferred, from the laws of England declaring that a murderer shall be put to death, that it is on account of his being a murderer. Neither could our first parents justly infer, from its being told them "The day ye eat thereof ye shall surely die," that it should be on that account.

The truth is, though eternal life be the gift of God, yet eternal death is the proper wages of sin; and though faith is not represented, in the above passage; as the procuring cause of salvation, yet unbelief is of damnation. It is common for the Scriptures to describe those that shall be saved by something which is pleasing to God, and by which they are made meet for glory; and those that shall be lost by something which is displeasing to God, and by which they are fitted for destruction.

John iii. 18. "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." Two things are here observable. First: Believing is expressive of a saving faith, seeing it exempts from condemnation. Secondly: The want of this faith is a sin on account of which the unbeliever stands condemned. It is true that unbelief is an evidence of our being under the condemnation of God's righteous law for all our other sins; but this is not all: unbelief is itself a sin, which greatly aggravates our guilt, and which, if persisted in, gives the finishing stroke to our destruction. That this idea is taught by the Evangelist appears, partly from his dwelling upon the dignity of the character offended, the "only begotten Son of God;" and partly from his expressly adding, "this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."

Luke xix. 27. "But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me." If Christ, as wearing his mediatorial crown, has not a right to unreserved submission and hearty obedience, he has no right to be angry; and still less to punish men as his enemies for not being willing that he should reign over them. He has no right to reign over them, at least not over their hearts, if it be not their duty to obey him from their hearts. The whole controversy, indeed, might be reduced to an issue on this argument. Every sinner ought to be Christ's friend, or his enemy, or to stand by as neutral. To say he ought to be his enemy is too gross to be defended. To plead for his being neutral is pleading for what our Lord declares to be impossible: "he that is not with me is against me." There is, therefore, no room for any other position than that he ought to be his cordial friend; and this is the plain implication of the passage.

2 Thess. ii. 10—12. "Whose coming is—with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." From hence we may remark two things: First, that faith is here called a receiving the love of the truth: and that it means saving faith is manifest, seeing it is added, "that they might be saved." Secondly: That their not receiving the love of the truth, or, which is the same thing, not believing with such a faith as that to which salvation is promised, was the "cause" of their being given up of God, and carried away with all deceivableness of unrighteousness. The loose and cold-hearted manner in which merely nominal Christians held the truth would occasion the introduction of the grand Papal apostacy, by which great numbers of them would be swept away. And this, assuredly, ought to afford a lesson to nominal Christians of the present day, who, owing to the same cause are fast approaching to infidelity. But, unless we suppose that these professors of religion ought to have "received the love of the truth," there is no accounting for the awful judgments of God upon them for the contrary.

VI. *Other spiritual exercises which sustain an inseparable connection with faith in Christ, are represented as the duty of men in general.*

Though this controversy has been mostly carried on with respect to the duty of faith, yet it, in reality, extends to the whole of spiritual religion. Those who deny that sinners are obliged to believe in Christ for salvation will not allow "that it is their duty to do any thing truly and spiritually good. It is a kind of maxim, with such persons, "that none, can be obliged to act spiritually, but spiritual men." Spiritual exercises appear to me to mean the same as holy exercises; for the "new man," which is created after God, is said to be "created in righteousness, and true holiness:" and, as to two

kinds of true holiness, the Scriptures, I believe, are silent. But, as my opponents affix different ideas to the term spiritual, to prevent all disputes about it, I shall proceed on a ground which they will not refuse. Whatever has the promise of spiritual blessings is considered as a spiritual exercise. With this criterion of spirituality in view, let the following passages of Scripture be carefully considered. "How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity; and the scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn you at my reproof: behold I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you." "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction." "Wisdom crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors. Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of men. O ye simple, understand wisdom; and ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart. Hear for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things." "Receive my instruction, and not silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold."—"Hearken unto me, O ye children; for blessed are they that keep my ways. Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me, findeth life and shall obtain favor of the Lord. But he that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me, love death." "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul?" "Circumcise, therefore, the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiff-necked." "Rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God." "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord."

We may remark on these passages, First: The persons addressed were unconverted sinners, as appears by their characters; fools, scorners, haters of knowledge, uncircumcised in heart, impenitent. Secondly: The things to which they were exhorted were things spiritually good. This appears, in part, from the names by which the exercises themselves are distinguished; namely, such understanding as originates in the fear of the Lord, fearing, loving, serving God with all the heart, and with all the soul, circumcision of the heart, repentance, conversion: and, partly, from the blessings of salvation being promised to them: these are expressed by the terms, blessedness, life, favor of the Lord, the blotting out of sin.

More particularly: The love of God is a spiritual exercise; for it has the promise of spiritual blessings. "All things work together for good to them that love God." "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." But the love of God is required of men without distinction. The people of Israel, like all other people, were composed of good and bad men; but they were all required to "love" Jehovah, and to "cleave" to him, and that "with all their heart, and soul, and mind, and strength." Deut. vi. 5; xxx. 20. The moral part of those precepts which God gave to them on tables of stone was binding on all mankind. Even those who had no other means of knowing God than were afforded by the works of nature, with, perhaps, a portion of tradition, were required to glorify him as God, and to be thankful. Rom. i. 21.

The love of God, as is here intimated, is either a holy thankfulness for the innumerable instances of his goodness, or a cordial approbation of his glorious character. It is true there are favors for which the regenerate are obliged to love him, which are not common to the unregenerate; but every one has shared a sufficient portion of his bounty to have incurred a debt of gratitude. It is generally allowed, indeed, by our opponents, that God ought to be loved as our Creator and benefactor; but this, they suppose, is is not a spiritual exercise. There is a kind of gratitude, it is granted, which is not spiritual, but merely the effect of natural self-love, and in which God is no otherwise regarded than as subservient to our happiness. But this does not always respect the bestowing of temporal mercies: the same feelings which possessed the carnal Israelites, when they felt themselves delivered from Pharaoh's yoke, and saw their oppressors sinking in the sea, are still the feelings of many professors of religion, under a groundless persuasion of their being elected of God, and having their sins forgiven them. Gratitude of this sort has nothing spiritual in it: but then neither is it any part of duty. God nowhere requires it, either of saints or sinners. That which God requires is a spiritual exercise: whether it be on account of temporal or spiritual mercies is immaterial; the object makes no difference as to the nature of the act: that thanksgiving with which the common mercies of life are received by the godly, and by which they are sanctified to them, (1. Tim. iv. 3—5,) is no less of a spiritual nature, and is no less connected with eter-

nal life, than gratitude for the forgiveness of sin. This thankful spirit, instead of being an operation of self-love, or regarding God merely in subserviency to our own happiness, greatly consists in self-abasement, or in a sense of our own unworthiness. Its language is, "Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?" "What shall I render unto the Lord, for all his benefits?" This is holy gratitude; and to be destitute of it is to be "unthankful, unholy."

With respect to a cordial approbation of the divine character, or glorifying God, as God, and which enters into the essence of holy love, there can be no reasonable doubt whether it be obligatory on sinners. Such is the glory of God's name that nothing but the most inexcusable and deep-rooted depravity could render any intelligent creature insensible to it. Those parts of Scripture which describe the devout feelings of godly men, particularly the Psalms of David, abound in expressions of affection to the name of the Lord. "How excellent is thy name in all the earth!" Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory." "O magnify the Lord with me; and let us exalt his name together." "Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: let them that love thy name say continually, the Lord be magnified." "Blessed be his glorious name forever, and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen, and Amen."

This affection to the name of the Lord, as it is revealed in his word and works, and particularly in the work of redemption, lies at the foundation of all true desire after an interest in his mercy. If we seek mercy of any one whose character we disesteem, it is merely for our own sakes; and, if he be acquainted with our motives, we cannot hope to succeed. This it is that leads us to mourn for sin as sin, and not merely for the inconvenience to which it exposes us. This it is which renders salvation through the atonement of Christ so acceptable. He that loves only himself, provided he might be saved, would care little or nothing for the honor of the divine character; but he that loves God will be concerned for his glory. Heaven itself would be no enjoyment to him if his admission must be at the expense of righteousness.

"God is to be loved," says Dr. Gill, "for himself, because of his own nature and the perfections of it, which render him amiable and lovely, and worthy of our strongest love and affection; as these are displayed in the works of creation and providence, and especially of grace, redemption, and salvation, to all which the Psalmist has respect, when he says, 'O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name,' nature and perfections, 'in all the earth!' Psalm viii. 1. As God is great in himself and greatly to be praised, great and greatly to be feared, so great and greatly to be loved, for what he is in himself. And this is the purest and most perfect love of a creature towards God; for, if we love him only for his goodness towards us, it is loving ourselves rather than him, at least a loving him for ourselves, and so a loving ourselves more than him."* But this "most pure and perfect love" is manifestly the duty of all mankind, however far they are from a compliance with it. "Give unto the Lord, ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength. Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name: bring an offering and come before him: worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands." "Kings of the earth, and all people; princes and all judges of the earth; both young men and maidens, old men and children; let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is excellent: his glory is above the earth and heaven." "Let the people praise thee, O God, let all the people praise thee!"

That love to Christ is a spiritual exercise may, I suppose, be taken for granted. The grace or favor of God is with all who possess it in sincerity. Eph. vi. 24. But love to Christ is the duty of every one to whom the gospel is preached. On no other principles could the apostle have written as he did: "If any one love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema, Maran-atha!" It is worthy of notice that this awful sentence is not denounced against sinners as positively hating Christ, but as not loving him; plainly implying his worthiness of a place in our best affections, and that, were it possible for us to be indifferent towards him, even that indifference would deserve the heavy curse of the Almighty at the last judgment. Paul appears to have felt as a soldier would feel towards the best of princes or commanders. If, after David's return from his engagement with Goliath, when the women of Israel were praising him in their songs, any of the sons of Belial had spoken of him in the language of detraction, it would have been natural for one of a patriotic spirit, deeply impressed with an idea of the hero's worth, and of the service he had rendered to his country, thus to have expressed himself: If any man love not the son of Jesse, let him be banished from among the tribes of Israel. Of this kind were the feelings of the apostle. He had served under his Lord and Saviour for many years; and now, sensible in a high degree of the glory of his character, he scruples not to pronounce that man who loves him not, "accursed!"

* Body of Divinity, Vol. III, Chap. IX.

The fear of God is a spiritual exercise; for it has the promise of spiritual blessings. Ps. xxxiv. 7, 9; ciii. 11, 13, 17. But it is also a duty required of men, and that without the distinction of regenerate or unregenerate. "O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me and keep all my commandments always!" "Fear before him all the earth." "Let all that be round about him bring presents unto him that ought to be feared." "Who would not fear thee, O King of nations?" "Fear thou God." Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man." "Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God:" "and that their children, which have not known any thing, may hear and learn to fear the Lord your God." "Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling." "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying, Fear God and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come; and worship him that made heaven and earth!" Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy." To say of men "they have no fear of God before their eyes," is to represent them as under the dominion of depravity.

It may be objected that the Scriptures distinguish between that holy fear of offending God which is peculiar to his children, and a mere dread of the misery threatened against sin, which is found in the wicked. True; there is a fear of God which is not spiritual; such was that of the slothful servant; and the same is found in hypocrites and devils, (Luke xix. 21; James ii. 19:) this, however, is no part of duty, but rather of punishment. God does not require this, either of saints or sinners. That which he requires is of a holy nature, such as is expressed in the passages before quoted, which is spiritual, and has the promise of spiritual blessings. It resembles that of a dutiful child to his father, and is therefore properly called filial; and, though none are possessed of it but the children of God, yet that is because none else are possessed of a right spirit.

Repentance, or a godly sorrow for sin, is a spiritual exercise; for it abounds with promises of spiritual blessings. But repentance is a duty required of every sinner. "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." "Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double-minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep; let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up." The "hardiness of heart" which our Lord found in the Jews, and which is the opposite of repentance, "grieved" him; which it would not, had it not been their sin. Mark iii. 5. Finally: A hard and impenitent heart treasures up wrath against the day of wrath; but impenitence could be no sin if penitence were not a duty. Rom. ii. 5.

Repentance, it is allowed, like all other spiritual exercises, has its counterfeit, and which is not spiritual; but neither is it that which God requires at the hands of either saints or sinners. What is called natural, and sometimes legal repentance, is merely a sorrow on account of consequences. Such was the repentance of Saul and Judas.

In order to evade the argument arising from the addresses of John the Baptist, of Christ and his apostles, who called upon the Jewish people "to repent and believe the gospel," it has been alleged that it was only an outward repentance and acknowledgment of the truth to which they were exhorted, and not that which is spiritual or which has the promise of spiritual blessings. But it would be difficult, if not impossible, to prove that such repentance and faith are any where required of sinners, or that it is consistent with the divine perfections to require them. An outward repentance and reformation of manners, as distinguished from that which consists in godly sorrow, is only repentance in appearance. Whatever sorrow there is in it, it is not on account of sin, but its consequences; and to suppose that Christ or his servants required this would be doing them infinite dishonor. It is no other than supposing them to have betrayed the authority of God over the human heart, to have sanctioned hypocrisy, and to have given counsels to sinners which, if taken, would leave them still exposed to everlasting destruction.

The case of the Ninevites has been alleged as furnishing an example of that repentance which is the duty of men in general, and which Christ and his apostles required of the Jews. I do not know that the repentance of the Ninevites was genuine, or connected with spiritual blessings: neither do my opponents know that it was not. Probably the repentance of some of them was genuine, while that of the greater part might be only put on in conformity to the orders of government, or, at most, merely as the effect of terror. But, whatever it was, even though none of it were genuine, the object professed was godly sorrow for sin; and if God treated them upon the supposition of their being sincere,

and it repented him of the evil which he had threatened, it is no more than he did to Pharaoh, Abijah, Ahab, and others.* It is a very unjust conclusion to draw from his conduct that their repentance was such as he approved, and the whole which he required at their hands. So far from it, there might be nothing in any of them which could approve itself to him as the searcher of hearts: and though for wise reasons he might think it proper, in those instances, to overlook their hypocrisy, and to treat them on the supposition of their repentance being what they professed it to be; yet he might still reserve to himself the power of judging them at the last day according to their works.

The object of John the Baptist was not to effect a mere outward reformation of manners: but to "turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Such was the effect actually produced by his ministry, and by that of Christ and the apostles. The repentance which they called upon sinners to exercise was such as entitled those who possessed it to Christian "baptism," and which had the promise of "the remission of sins." Mark i. 4; Acts ii. 38.

It is plainly intimated, by the apostle Paul, that all repentance except that which worketh in a way of godly sorrow, and which he calls repentance to salvation, *needs to be repented of.* It is the mere sorrow of the world, which worketh death. 2 Cor. vii. 10. But that which requires to be repented of cannot be commanded of God, or constitute any part of a sinner's duty. The duty of every transgressor is to be sorry at heart for having sinned.

Humility, or lowliness of mind, is a spiritual disposition, and has the promise of spiritual blessings. "Though the Lord is high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly." "He giveth grace unto the humble."—"Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven;" yet this disposition is required as the duty of all.—"Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up." Humility does not consist in thinking less, or more meanly, of ourselves than is true. The difference between one that is lowly and one that is proud lies in this: the one thinks justly of himself, and the other unjustly. The most humble Christian only thinks of himself "soberly, as he ought to think." All the instances of humility recorded of the godly in the Scriptures are but so many examples of a right spirit, a spirit brought down to their situation. "Carry back the ark of God into the city," says David: "If I shall find favor in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and show me both it and his habitation: but if he thus say, I have no delight in thee, behold, here am I; let him do to me as seemeth good unto him." This was very different from the spirit of his predecessor, when he was given to expect the loss of the kingdom; yet it was no more than was the duty of Saul, as well as of David; and all his proud and rebellious opposition served only to increase his guilt and misery. The spirit of the publican was no more than was becoming a sinner, and would have been becoming the Pharisee himself.

Finally: If whatever has the promise of spiritual blessings be a spiritual exercise, every thing that is right, or which accords with the divine precept, must be so; for the Scriptures uniformly promise eternal life to every such exercise. They that "do good" shall come forth to the resurrection of life. He that "doeth righteousness is righteous." The giving of "a cup of cold water" to a disciple of Christ because he belongs to him will be followed with a disciple's reward. Nay, a "blessing" is pronounced upon those who are "not offended" in him. But though these things are spiritual and are characteristic of the godly, yet who will say they are not binding on the ungodly? Are they excused from "good," from "doing right," from bestowing "a cup of water" on a disciple of Jesus, because he belongs to him? At least, are they allowed to be offended in him?

If God's law be spiritual, and remain in full force as a standard of obligation—if men while unconverted, have no real conformity to it—if regeneration be the writing of it upon the heart, or the renewal of the mind to a right spirit—all these things are clear and consistent. This is for the same thing, in different respects, to be "man's duty and God's gift:" a position which Dr. Owen has fully established;* and somewhere remarks that he who is ignorant of it has yet to learn one of the first principles of religion. In short, this is rendering the work of the Spirit what the Scriptures denominate it—"leading us by the way that we should go." Isa. xlviii. 17. But, if that which is bestowed by the Holy Spirit be something different in its nature from that which is required in the divine precepts, I see not what is to be made of the Scriptures, nor how it is that righteousness, goodness, or any thing

* Exod. viii. 8, 9; 2 Chron. xiii. with 1 Kings xx; 1 Kings xxi. 27, 29.

* Display of Arminianism, Chap. X.

else which is required of men, should be accompanied, as it is, with the promise of eternal life.

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PART III.

Answers to Objections.

The principal objections that are made to the foregoing statement of things are taken from—the nature of original holiness, as it existed in our first parents—the divine decrees—particular redemption—the covenant of works—the inability of man—the operations of the Spirit—and the necessity of a divine principle in order to believing.

It may be worthy of some notice, at least from those who are perpetually reproaching the statement here defended as leading to Arminianism, that the greater part of these objections are of Arminian original. They are the same, for substance, as have been alleged by the leading writers of that scheme, in their controversies with the Calvinists; and from the writings of the latter it were easy to select answers to them. This, in effect, is acknowledged by Mr. Brine, who, however, considers these answers as insufficient, and therefore prefers others before them.*

It also deserves to be considered whether objections drawn from such subjects as the above, in which we may presently get beyond our depth, ought to weigh against that body of evidence which has been adduced from the plain declarations and precepts of the holy Scriptures. What if, by reason of darkness, we could not ascertain the precise nature of the principle of our first parents? It is certain we know but little of original purity. Our disordered souls are incapable of forming just ideas of so glorious a state. To attempt, therefore, to settle the boundaries of even their duty, by an abstract inquiry into the nature of their powers and principles, would be improper; and still more so to make it the medium by which to judge of our own. There are but two ways by which we can judge on such a subject: the one is from the character of the Creator, and the other from Scripture testimony. From the former, we may infer the perfect purity of the creature, as coming out of the hands of God; but nothing can be concluded of his inability to believe in Christ, had he been in circumstances which required it. As to the latter, the only passage that I recollect to have seen produced for the purpose is 1 Cor. xv. 47: "The first man was of the earth, earthy," which Mr. Johnson of Liverpool alleged to prove the earthiness of Adam's mind, or principles: but Mr. Brine sufficiently refutes this, proving that this divine proposition respects the body and not the principles of our first father;* and thus Dr. Gill expounds it.

With regard to the doctrine of divine decrees, &c., it is a fact that the great body of the divines who have believed those doctrines have also believed the other. Neither Augustine, nor Calvin, who each in his day defended predestination, and the other doctrines connected with it, ever appear to have thought of denying it to be the duty of every sinner who has heard the gospel to repent and believe in Jesus Christ. Neither did the other Reformers, nor the Puritans of the sixteenth century, nor the divines at the synod of Dort, (who opposed Arminius,) nor any of the Nonconformists of the seventeenth century, so far as I have any acquaintance with their writings, ever so much as hesitate upon this subject. The writings of Calvin himself would now be deemed Arminian by a great number of our opponents. I allow that the principles here defended may be inconsistent with the doctrines of grace, notwithstanding the leading advocates of those doctrines have admitted them; and am far from wishing any person to build his faith on the authority of great men; but their admission of them ought to suffice for the silencing of that kind of opposition against them which consists in calling names.

Were a difficulty allowed to exist, as to the reconciling of these subjects, it would not warrant a rejection of either of them. If I find two doctrines affirmed, or implied in the Scriptures, which, to my feeble understanding, may seem to clash, I ought not to embrace the one and to reject the other because of their supposed inconsistency; for on the same ground, another person might embrace that which I reject and reject that which I embrace, and have equal scriptural authority for his faith as I have for mine. Yet in this manner many have acted on both sides: some, taking the general precepts and invitations of Scripture for their standard, have rejected the doctrine of discriminating grace; others, taking the declarations of salvation as being a fruit of electing love for their standard, deny that sinners without distinction are called upon to believe for the salvation of their souls. Hence it is that we hear of Calvinistic and Arminian texts; as though these leaders had agreed to divide the Scriptures between them. The truth is, there are but two ways for us to take: one is to reject them both, and the Bible with them, on account of its inconsistencies; the other is to embrace them both,

* Arminian Principles of a Late Writer Refuted, p. 6.

* Johnson's Mistakes Noted and Rectified, pp. 18—23.

concluding that, as they are both revealed in the Scriptures, they are both true, and both consistent, and that it is owing to the darkness of our understandings that they do not appear so to us. Those excellent lines of Dr. Watts, in his Hymn on Election, one should think, must approve themselves to every pious heart:—

> But, O my soul, if truth so bright
> Should dazzle and confound thy sight,
> Yet still his written will obey,
> And wait the great decisive day.

Had we more of that about which we contend, it would teach us more to suspect our own understandings, and to submit to the wisdom of God. Abraham, that pattern of faith, might have made objections to the command to offer up his son, on the ground of its inconsistency with the promise, and might have set himself to find some other meaning for the terms; but he "believed God," and left it to him to reconcile his promise and his precepts. It was not for him to dispute, but to obey.

These general remarks, however, are not introduced for the purpose of avoiding a particular attention to the several objections, but rather as preparatory to it.

On the principle of holiness possessed by man in innocence.

The objection drawn from this subject has been stated in the following words: "The holy principle connatural to Adam, and concreated with him, was not suited to live unto God through a mediator; that kind of life was above the extent of his powers, though perfect; and therefore, as he in a state of integrity had not a capacity of living unto God, agreeably to the nature of the new covenant, it is apprehended that his posterity, while under the first covenant, are not commanded to live unto God in that sort, or, in other words, to live by faith on God through a mediator."*

The whole weight of these important conclusions rests upon the first two sentences, which are mere unfounded assertions. For the truth of them no proof whatever is offered. What evidence is there that "the principle of holiness concreated with Adam was not suited to live unto God through a mediator?" That his circumstances were such as not to need a mediator is true; but this involves no such consequence. A subject, while he preserves his loyality, needs no mediator in approaching the throne: if he have offended, it is otherwise; but a change of circumstances would not require a change of principles. On the contrary, the same principle of loyal affection that would induce him while innocent to approach the throne with modest confidence would induce him after having offended to approach it with penitence, or, which is the same thing, to be sorry at heart for what he had done: and if a mediator were at hand, with whose interposition the sovereign had declared himself well pleased, it would at the same time lead him to implore forgiveness in his name.

Had Cain lived before the fall, God would not have been offended at his bringing an offering without a sacrifice; but after that event, and the promise of the woman's seed, together with the institution of sacrifices, such a conduct was highly offensive. It was equally disregarding the threatening and the promise: treating the former as if nothing were meant by it; and the latter as a matter of no account. It was practically saying, God is not in earnest. There is no great evil in sin; nor any necessity for an atonement. If I come with my offering, I shall doubtless be accepted, and my Creator will think himself honored. Such is still the language of a self-righteous heart. But is it thus that Adam's posterity while "under the first covenant" (or, rather, while vainly hoping for the promise of the first covenant, after having broken its conditions) are required to approach an offended God? If the principle of Adam in innocence was not suited to live to God through a mediator, and this be the standard of duty to his carnal descendants, it must of course be their duty either not to worship God at all or to worship him as Cain did, without any respect to an atoning sacrifice. On the contrary, is there not reason to conclude that the case of Cain and Abel was designed to teach mankind, from the very outset of the world, God's determination to have no fellowship with sinners, but through a mediator; and that all attempts to approach him in any other way would be vain and presumptuous?

It is true that man in innocence was unable to repent of sin, or to believe in the Saviour; for he had no sin to repent of, nor was any Saviour revealed or needed. But he was equally unable to repent with such a natural sorrow for sin as is allowed to be the duty of his posterity, or to believe the history of the gospel in the way which is also allowed to be binding on all who hear it. To this it might be added he was unable to perform the duty of a father; for he had no children to educate: nor could he pity or relieve the miserable; for there were no miserable objects to be pitied or relieved. Yet we do not conclude from thence that his descendants are excused from these duties.

"That Adam in a state of innocence," says Dr. Gill, "had the power of believing in Christ, and did believe in him as the second person of the Trinity, as the Son of God, cannot well be denied; since with the

* Mr. Brines Motives to Love and Unity, pp. 50, 51.

other two persons he was his Creator and Preserver. And his not believing in him as the Mediator, Saviour, and Redeemer, did not arise from any defect of power in him, but from the state, condition, and situation in which he was, and from the nature of the revelation made unto him; for no doubt Adam had a power to believe every word of God, or any revelation that was or might be made unto him."*

The reader will perceive the origin of this objection, if he look into Dr. Owen's Display of Arminianism, Chap. VIII. He there complains of the "attempt of Arminians to draw down our first parents, even from the instant of their forming, into the same condition wherein we are engaged by reason of corrupt nature." He mentions several of their maxims and sentiments, and, among others, two of their sayings; the one of the Remonstrants in their Apology, and the other of the six Arminian Collocutors at the Hague.

"The will of man," say the former," had never any spiritual endowments." "In the spiritual death of sin," say the latter," there are no spiritual gifts properly wanting in will, because they were never there." "The sum is," adds the Doctor, ironically, "man was created with a nature not only weak and imperfect, unable by its native strength and endowments to attain that supernatural end for which he was made, and which he was commanded to seek; but depraved also with a love and desire of things repugnant to the will of God, by reason of an inbred inclination to sinning! It doth not properly belong to this place to show how they extenuate those gifts also with which they cannot deny but that he was endued, and also deny those which he had; as a power to believe in Christ, or to assent unto any truth that God should reveal unto him: and yet they grant this privilege unto every one of his posterity, in that depraved condition of nature whereunto by sin he cast himself and us. We have all now, they tell us, a power of believing in Christ; that is Adam by his fall obtained a supernatural endowment far more excellent than any he had before!"

That there are differences between the principle of holiness in innocent Adam and that which is wrought in believers may be admitted. The production of the former was merely an expression of the Creator's purity; the latter of his grace: that was capable of being lost; this is secured by promise: the one was exercised in contemplating and adoring God as the Creator and Preserver; the other, not only in these characters, but as the God of salvation. The same may be allowed concerning the life promised to Adam in case of obedience and that which is enjoyed through a Mediator. The one will be greater than the other; for Christ came not only that we might have life, but that we might have it "more abundantly:" but these differences are merely circumstantial, and therefore do not affect the argument. The joy of angels is greatly increased by man's redemption; but it does not follow that their principles are different from what they were prior to that event. A life of joy in heaven is far more glorious than a life of communion with God on earth; yet the principles of saints on earth and saints in heaven are not therefore of a different nature.

That the principle of holiness in Adam, and that which is wrought in believers, are essentially the same, I conclude from the following reasons:

First: They are both formed after the same likeness, *the image of God.* "God created man in his own image; in the image of God created he him." "Put ye on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." If God be immutable in his nature, that which is created after him must be the same for substance at all times and in all circumstances. There cannot be two specifically different images of the same original.

Secondly: They are both a conformity to the same standard, *The moral law.* That the spirit and conduct of man in innocence was neither more nor less than a perfect conformity to this law, I suppose, will be allowed; and the same may be said of the spirit and conduct of Jesus Christ so far as he was our examplar, or the model after which we are formed. God's law was within his heart. It was "his meat and drink to do his will." He went to "the end of the law for righteousness;" but it does not appear that he went beyond it. The superiority of his obedience to that of all others lay, not in his doing more than the law required, but in the dignity of his person, which stamped infinite value on every thing he did. But if such was the spirit and conduct of Christ, to whose image we are predestinated to be conformed, it must of necessity be ours. This also perfectly agrees with those scriptural representations which describe the work of the Spirit as "writing God's law in the heart," (Ps. xl. 8; Jer. xxxi. 33;) and with those which represent the ultimate state of holiness to which we shall arrive in heaven as no more than a conformity to this law and this model: "The spirits of just men made perfect." "We shall be like him."

Thirdly: The terms used to describe the one imply that it is of the same nature as the other. Conversion is expressed by a return to God, (Is. lv. 7,) which denotes a

* Cause of God and Truth, Part III, Chap. III.

recovery to a right state of mind, after a departure from him. Regeneration is called a "washing," which expresses the restoring of the soul to purity, from which it had degenerated; and hence the same divine operation is in the same passage called the "renewing" of the Holy Spirit.

But "this renovation," it has been said, "is spoken of the mind, and not of a principle in the mind."* The renewal of the mind must either be natural or moral. If the former, it would seem as if we had divested ourselves of the use of our natural faculties, and that regeneration consists in restoring them. If the latter, by the mind must be meant the disposition of the mind, or, as the Scripture speaks, "the spirit of our minds." Eph. iv. 23. But this amounts to the same thing as a principle in our minds. There is no difference between a mind being restored to a right state and condition, and a right state and condition being restored to the mind.

Fourthly: Supreme love to God, which is acknowledged to be the principle of man in innocence, would necessarily lead a fallen creature to embrace the gospel way of salvation. This is clearly intimated in our Lord's reasoning with the Jews: "I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you. I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not." This reasoning on the contrary hypothesis was invalid; for, if receiving the Messiah was that to which a principle of supreme love to God was unequal, a non-reception of him would afford no proof of its absence. They might have had the love of God in them, and yet not have received him.

The love to God which was possessed by Adam in innocence was equal to that of the holy angels. His being of the "earth, earthy," as to his body, no more proves his inferiority to them, as to the principles of his mind, than it proves the inferiority of Christ in this respect, who before his resurrection was possessed of a natural and not a spiritual body. But it cannot be denied that the angels are capable of understanding, believing, and approving of the gospel way of salvation, it is above all others their chosen theme: "which things the angels desire to look into." It is true they do not embrace the Messiah as their Saviour, because they do not stand in need of salvation: but give a free invitation and their principles to a being that wants a Saviour, and he would not scruple a moment about accepting it. It is not possible for a creature to love God without loving the greatest friend of God, and embracing a gospel that more than any thing tends to exalt his character: neither is it possible to love mankind with a holy and affectionate regard towards their best interests without loving the friend of sinners, and approving of a doctrine that breathes "good will to men."

Concerning the decrees of God.

A general invitation to sinners to return to God, and be saved through Christ, it has been thought, must be inconsistent with an election of some and a consequent rejection of others. Such has been the mode of objecting used by the adversaries to the doctrines of discriminating grace;* and such is the mode of late adopted by our opponents.

In general, I would observe, if this mode of reasoning prove anything it will prove too much: it will prove that it is not the duty of some men to attend the means of grace, or in any way to seek after the salvation of their souls, or to be in the least degree concerned about it; for it may be pleaded that God cannot have made it their duty, or have invited them to attend the means of salvation, seeing he is determined not to bestow salvation upon them. And thus we must not only be driven to explain the general invitation to many who never came to the gospel-supper of a mere invitation to attend, the means of grace, but must absolutely give it up, and the Bible with it, on account of its inconsistency.

Farther; This mode of reasoning would prove that the use of means in order to obtain a temporal subsistence, and to preserve life, is altogether vain and inconsistent. If we believe that the future states of men are determined by God, we must also believe the same of their present states. The Scriptures teach the one no less than the other. "God hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of our habitation." Our "cup" is measured, and our "lot assigned us. Ps. xvi. 5. There is also "an appointed time for man upon earth: his days are as "the days of an hireling." "His days are determined, the number of his months is with God:" he has "appointed his bounds that he cannot pass." Yet those who reason as above, with regard to things of another life, are as attentive to the affairs of this life as other people. They are no less concerned than their neighbors for their present accommodation; nor less employed in divising means for the lengthening out of their lives, and of their tranquillity. But, if the purpose of God may consist with the agency of man in present concerns, it may in those which are future, whether we can perceive the link that unites them, or not; and if our duty, in the one case, be the same as if no such purpose existed, it is so in the other. "Secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed

* Motives to Love and Unity, p. 22.

* See Owen's Death of Death, Book IV, Ch. 1.

belong unto us and to our children forever."

It was the duty of Pharaoh to have followed the counsel of Moses, and to have let the people go; and his sin to pursue them into the sea; yet it was the purpose of God by this means to destroy him. Exod. vii. 1—4. Moses "sent messengers to Sihon king of Heshbon, with words of peace saying, Let me pass through thy land;" and it was, doubtless, the duty of Sihon to have complied with the request; yet it appears by the issue that the Lord had determined to give his country to Israel for a possession, and therefore gave him up to hardness of heart, by which it was accomplished. Deut. ii. 26—30.

If the days of man are determined, and his bounds appointed that he cannot pass them, it must have been determined, that the generation of the Israelites which went out of Egypt should die in the wilderness; yet it was their duty to have believed God, and to have gone up to possess the land; and their sin to disbelieve him and turn back in their hearts to Egypt. And it deserves particular notice that this their sin is held up, both by David and Paul, as an example for others to shun, and that in spiritual concerns. 1 Cor. x. 6—12. It was the determination of God that Ahab should fall in his expedition against Ramoth-gilead, as was plainly intimated to him by Micaiah; yet it was his duty to have hearkened to the counsel that was given him, and to have desisted from his purpose. I Kings xxii. 15—22. The destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans was determined of God, and frequently foretold by the prophets: yet the inhabitants were as frequently counselled to return from their evil ways, that they might avoid it. Jeremiah particularly entreated Zedekiah to follow his counsel, that he might save the city and himself from ruin. Ch. xxxviii. 20.

However such things may grate upon the minds of some, yet there are cases in which we ourselves are in the habit of using similar language, and that without any idea of attributing to God any thing inconsistent with the greatest perfection of moral character. If a wicked man be set on mischievous pursuits, and all the advices and warnings of his friends be lost upon him, we do not scruple to say, It seems as if God had determined to destroy him, and, therefore, has given him up to infatuation. In the use of such language, we have no idea of the determination of God being unjust or capricious. On the contrary, we suppose he may have wise and just reasons for doing as he does; and, as such, notwithstanding our compassion towards the party, we acquiesce in it. Whenever we speak of God as having determined to destroy a person, or a people, we feel the subject too profound for our comprehension; and well indeed we may. Even an inspired apostle, when discoursing of God's rejection of the Jewish nation, though he glances at the merciful aspect which this awful event wore towards the Gentiles, and traces some great and wise designs that should be answered by it; yet feels himself lost in this subject. Standing as on the brink of an unfathomable abyss, he exclaims, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" He believed the doctrine of divine decrees, or that God "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:" but he had no idea of making these things any part of the rule of duty; either so as to excuse his countrymen from the sin of unbelief, or himself from using every possible means that might accomplish their salvation. On the one hand, he quoted the words of David as applicable to them, "Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling-block, and a recompense unto them." On the other he declares, "I speak to you Gentiles"—"if by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them!"

There were those in that day, as well as in this, who objected, If things be as God hath purposed, "Why doth he yet find fault; for who hath resisted his will? This was no other than suggesting that the doctrine of decrees must needs operate to the setting aside of the fault of sinners; and this is the substance of what has been alleged from that day to this. Some because they cannot conceive of the doctrine but as drawing after it the consequence assigned to it by this replier against God, reject it, others appear to have no objection to the consequence itself, stamped as it is with infamy by the manner in which the apostle repelled it, and therefore admit the doctrine as connected with it! But so did not Paul. He held fast the doctrine of decrees, and held it as comporting with the fault of sinners. After all that he had written upon God's electing some, and rejecting others, he, in the same chapter, assigned the failure of those that failed to their "not seeking justification by faith in Christ; but as it were by the works of the law, stumbling at that stumbling-stone."

"God's word," says Mr. Brine, "and not his secret purpose, is the rule of our conduct."* We must exactly distinguish," says Dr. Owen, "between man's duty and God's purpose; there being no connection between them. The purpose and decree of God is not the rule of our duty, neither

* Certain Efficacy, &c. p. 151.

is the performance of our duty, in doing what we are commanded, any declaration of what is God's purpose to do, or his decree that it should be done. Especially is this to be seen and considered in the duty of the ministers of the gospel; in the dispensing of the word, in exhortations, invitations, precepts, and threatenings committed unto them; all which are perpetual declaratives of our duty, and do manifest the approbation of the thing exhorted and invited to, with the truth of the connection between one thing and another; but not of the counsel or purpose of God in respect of individual persons, in the ministry of the word. A minister is not to make inquiry after, nor to trouble himself about those secrets of the eternal mind of God, viz. whom he purposeth to save, and whom he hath sent Christ to die for in particular: it is enough for them to search his revealed will, and thence take their directions, from whence they have their commissions.—Wherefore there is no conclusion from the universal precepts of the word, concerning the things, unto God's purpose in himself concerning persons: they command and invite all to repent and believe; but they know not in particular on whom God will bestow repentance unto salvation, nor in whom he will effect the work of faith with power."*

On Particular Redemption.

Objections to the foregoing principles, from the doctrine of election, are generally united with those from particular redemption; and, indeed, they are so connected that the validity of the one stands or falls with that of the other.

To ascertain the force of the objection, it is proper to inquire wherein the peculiarity of redemption consists. If the atonement of Christ were considered as the literal payment of a debt—if the measure of his sufferings were according to the number of those for whom he died, and to the degree of their guilt, in such a manner as that if more had been saved, or if those who are saved had been more guilty, his sorrows must have been proportionably increased—it might, for aught I know, be inconsistent with indefinite invitations. But it would be equally inconsistent with the free forgiveness of sin, and with sinners being directed to apply for mercy as supplicants, rather than as claimants. I conclude, therefore, that an hypothesis which in so many important points is manifestly inconsistent with the Scriptures cannot be true.

On the other hand, if the atonement of Christ proceed not on the principle of commercial but of moral justice, or justice as it relates to crime—if its grand object were to express the divine displeasure against sin, (Rom. viii. 3,) and so to render the exercise of mercy, in all the ways wherein sovereign mercy should determine to apply it, consistent with righteousness, (Rom. iii. 25,) if it be in itself equal to the salvation of the whole world, were the whole world to embrace it—and if the peculiarity which attends it consists not in its insufficiency to save more than are saved, but in the sovereignty of its application—no such inconsistency can justly be ascribed to it.

If the atonement of Christ excludes a part of mankind in the same sense as it excludes fallen angels, why is the gospel addressed to the one any more than to the other? The message of wisdom is addressed to men and not to devils. The former are invited to the gospel supper, but the latter are not. These facts afford proof that Christ, by his death, opened a door of hope to sinners of the human race as sinners; affording a ground for their being invited, without distinction, to believe and be saved.

But as God might send his Son into the world to save men, rather than angels, so he may apply his sacrifice to the salvation of some men, and not of others. It is certain that a great part of the world have never heard the gospel; that the greater part of those who have heard it disregard it; and that those who believe are taught to ascribe not only their salvation, but faith itself, through which it is obtained, to the free gift of God. And, as the application of redemption is solely directed by sovereign wisdom, so, like every other event, it is the result of previous design. That which is actually done was intended to be done. Hence the salvation of those that are saved is described as the end which the Saviour had in view: "He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Herein, it is apprehended, consists the peculiarity of redemption.

There is no contradiction between this peculiarity of design in the death of Christ, and a universal obligation on those who hear the gospel to believe in him, or a universal invitation being addressed to them. If God, through the death of his Son, have promised salvation to all who comply with the gospel; and if there be no natural impossibility as to a compliance, nor any obstruction but that which arises from aversion of heart; exhortations and invitations to believe and be saved are consistent: and our duty, as preachers of the gospel, is to administer them, without any more regard to particular redemption than to election; both being secret things, which belong to the Lord our God, and which, however they be a rule to him, are none to us. If that

* Death of Death: Book IV. Chap. I.

which sinners are called upon to believe respected the particular design of Christ to save them, it would then be inconsistent: but they are neither exhorted nor invited to believe any thing but what is revealed, and what will prove true, whether they believe it or not. He that believeth in Jesus Christ must believe in him as he is revealed in the gospel; and that is as the Saviour of sinners. It is only as a sinner, exposed to the righteous displeasure of God, that he must approach him. If he think of coming to him as a favorite of heaven, or as possessed of any good qualities which may recommend him before other sinners, he deceives his soul: such notions are the bar to believing. "He that will know his own particular redemption before he will believe," says a well known writer, "begins at the wrong end of his work, and is very unlikely to come that way to the knowledge of it. Any man that owns himself a sinner hath as fair a ground for his faith as any one in the world that hath not yet believed; nor may any person, on any account, exclude himself from redemption, unless, by his obstinate and resolved continuance in unbelief, he hath marked out himself."*

"The preachers of the gospel, in their particular congregation," says another, "being utterly unacquainted with the purpose and secret counsel of God, being also forbidden to pry or search into it, (Deut. xxix. 29,) may justifiably call upon every man to believe, with assurance of salvation to every one in particular, upon his so doing; knowing and being fully persuaded of this, that there is enough in the death of Christ to save every one that shall do so: leaving the purpose and counsel of God, on whom he will bestow faith, and for whom in particular, Christ died (even as they are commanded) to himself. "When God calleth upon men to believe, he doth not, in the first place, call upon them to believe that Christ died for them; but that 'there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved,' but only of Jesus Christ, through whom salvation is preached."†

Of sinners being under the covenant of works.

Much has been said on this subject. in relation to the present controversy.‡ Yet I feel at a loss in forming a judgment wherein the force of the objection lies, as it is nowhere, that I can recollect, formed into a regular argument. If I understand Mr. Brine, he supposes, First, That all duty is required by the law either as a rule of life or as a covenant. Secondly: That, all unconverted sinners being under the law as a covenant, whatever the revealed will of God now requires of them is to be considered as the requirement of that covenant. Thirdly: That the terms of the covenant of works being "Do and live," they cannot, for this reason, be "Believe and be saved."

But allowing the distinction between the law as a rule of life and as a covenant to be just, before any conclusion can be drawn from it, it requires to be ascertained in what sense unbelievers are under a covenant of works, and whether, in some respects, it be not their sin to continue so. That they are under the curse, for having broken it, is true; and that they are still laboring to substitute something in the place of perfect obedience, by which they may regain the divine favor, is true also; but this latter ought not to be.* A self-righteous attachment to a covenant of works, or, as the Scripture expresses it, a being "of the works of the law," is no other than the working of unbelief, and rebellion against the truth. Strictly speaking, men are not now under the covenant of works, but under the curse for having broken it. God is not in covenant with them, nor they with him. The law, as a covenant, was recorded, and a new and enlarged edition of it given to Israel at mount Sinai; not, however, for the purpose of "giving life" to those who had broken it; but rather as a preparative to a better covenant. Its precepts still stand as the immutable will of God towards his creatures; its promises as memorials of what might have been expected from his goodness, in case of obedience; and its curses as a flaming sword that guards the tree of life. It is stationed in the oracles of God as a faithful watchman, to repel the vain hopes of the self-righteous, and convince them of the necessity of a Saviour. Rom. vii. 10; Matt. xix. 17. Hence it was given to Israel by the hand of Moses, as a mediator. Gal. iii. 19—21.

But if unbelievers be no otherwise under the covenant of works than as they are exposed to its curse, it is improper to say that whatever is required of them in the Scriptures is required by that covenant, and as a term of life. God requires nothing of fallen creatures as a term of life. He requires them to love him with all their hearts, the same as if they had never apostatized, but not with a view to regain his lost favor; for, were they henceforward perfectly to comply with the divine precepts, unless they could atone for past offences, (which is impossible,) they could have no ground to expect the bestowment of everlasting life. It is enough for us that the revealed will of

* Elisha Coles on God's Sovereignty, on Redemption.
† Dr. Owen's Death, &c., B. IV. Ch. 1.
‡ Mr. Brine's Motives, &c., pp. 37—42.

* The sinner's hope, that he can be justified by the law he has broken, is an illegal hope; and a just view of the extent, strictness, spirituality, and equity of the law, would cut it up by the roots. R.

God to sinners says, Believe; while the gospel graciously adds the promise of salvation.

On the inability of sinners to believe in Christ, and do things spiritually good.

This objection is seldom made in form, unless it be by persons who deny it to be the duty of a sinner to love God with all his heart, and his neighbor as himself. Intimations are often given, however, that it is absurd and cruel to require of any man what it is beyond his power to perform; and as the Scriptures declare that "no man can come to Christ, except the Father draw him," and that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned," it is concluded that these are things to which the sinner, while unregenerate, is under no obligation.

The answer that has frequently been made to this reasoning is, in effect, as follows: Men are no more unable to do things spiritually good, than they are to be subject to the law of God, which "the carnal mind is not, nor can be." And the reason why we have no power to comply with these things is, we have lost it by the fall: but, though we have lost our ability to obey, God has not lost his authority to command. There is some truth in this answer; but it is apprehended to be insufficient. It is true that sinners are no more and no otherwise unable to do any thing spiritually good than they are to yield a perfect submission to God's holy law; and that the inability of both arises from the same source—the original apostacy of human nature. Yet, if the nature of this inability were direct, or such as consisted in the want of rational faculties, bodily powers, or external advantages, its being the consequence of the fall would not set aside the objection. Some men pass through life totally insane. This may be one of the effects of sin; yet the Scriptures never convey any idea of such persons being dealt with, at the last judgment, on the same ground as if they had been sane. On the contrary, they teach that "to whom much is given, of him much shall be required." Another is deprived of the sight of his eyes, and so rendered unable to read the Scriptures. This also may be the effect of sin; and, in some cases, of his own personal misconduct; but, whatever punishment may be inflicted on him for such misconduct, he is not blameworthy for not reading the Scriptures, after he has lost his ability to do so. A third possesses the use of reason, and of all his senses and members; but has no other opportunity of knowing the will of God than what is afforded him by the light of nature. It would be equally repugnant to Scripture and reason to suppose that this man will be judged by the same rule as others who have lived under the light of revelation. "As many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law."

The inability, in each of these cases, is natural; and, to whatever degree it exists, let it arise from what cause it may, it excuses its subjects of blame, in the account of both God and man. The law of God itself requires no creature to love him, or obey him, beyond his "strength," or with more than all the powers which he possesses. If the inability of sinners to believe in Christ, or to do things spiritually good, were of this nature, it would undoubtedly form an excuse in their favor; and it must be as absurd to exhort them to such duties as to exhort the blind to look, the deaf to hear, or the dead to walk. But the inability of sinners is not such as to induce the Judge of all the earth (who cannot do other than right) to abate in his demands. It is a fact that he does require them, and that without paying any regard to their inability, to love him, and to fear him, and to do all his commandments always. The blind are admonished to look, the deaf to hear, and the dead to arise. Isa. xlii. 18; Ephes. v. 14. If there were no other proof than what is afforded by this single fact, it ought to satisfy us that the blindness, deafness, and death of sinners, to that which is spiritually good, is of a different nature from that which furnishes an excuse. This however, is not the only ground of proof. The thing speaks for itself. There is an essential difference between an inability which is independent of the inclination and one that is owing to nothing else. It is just as impossible, no doubt, for any person to do that which he has no mind to do as to perform that which surpasses his natural powers; and hence it is that the same terms are used in the one case as in the other. Those who were under the dominion of envy and malignity "could not speak peaceably;" and those who have "eyes full of adultery cannot cease from sin." Hence also, the following language; "How can ye, being evil, speak good things?" "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them." "The carnal mind is enmity against God; and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." "No man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him." It is also true that many have affected to treat the distinction between natural and moral inability as more curious than solid. "If we be unable," say they, "we are unable. As to the nature of the inability, it is a matter of no account. Such distinctions are perplex-

ing to plain Christians, and beyond their capacity." But surely the plainest and weakest Christian, in reading his Bible, if he pay any regard to what he reads, must perceive a manifest difference between the blindness of Bartimeus, who was ardently desirous that "he might receive his sight," and that of the unbelieving Jews, who "closed their eyes, lest they should see, and be converted, and be healed;" and between the want of the natural sense of hearing, and the state of those who "have ears, but hear not."

So far as my observation extends, those persons who affect to treat this distinction as a matter of mere curious speculation are as ready to make use of it as other people where their own interest is concerned. If they be accused of injuring their fellow-creatures, and can allege that what they did was not knowingly, or of design, I believe they never fail to do so; or, when charged with neglecting their duty to a parent or a master, if they can say in truth that they were unable to do it at the time let their will have been ever so good, they are never known to omit the plea; and should such a master or parent reply, by suggesting that their want of ability arose from want of inclination, they would very easily understand it to be the language of reproach, and be very earnest to maintain the contrary. You never hear a person in such circumstances reason as he does in religion. He does not say, "If I be unable I am unable; it is of no account whether my inability be of this kind or that:" but he labors with all his might to establish the difference. Now, if the subject be so clearly understood and acted upon where interest is concerned, and never appears difficult but in religion, it is but too manifest where the difficulty lies. If, by fixing the guilt of our conduct upon our father Adam, we can sit comfortably in our nest, we shall be very averse from a sentiment that tends to disturb our repose by planting a thorn in it.

It is sometimes objected that the inability of sinners to believe in Christ is not the effect of their depravity; for that Adam himself, in his purest state, was only a natural man, and had no power to perform spiritual duties. But this objection belongs to another topic, and has, I hope, been already answered. To this, however, it may be added, "the natural man, who receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God," (1 Cor. ii. 14,) is not a man possessed of the holy image of God, as was Adam, but of mere natural accomplishments, as were the "wise men of the world," the philosophers of Greece and Rome, to whom the things of God were "foolishness." Moreover, if the inability of sinners to perform spiritual duties were of the kind alleged in the objection they must be equally unable to commit the opposite sins. He that, from the constitution of his nature, is absolutely unable to understand, or believe, or love, a certain kind of truth, must, of necessity, be alike unable to shut his eyes against it, to disbelieve, to reject, or to hate it. But it is manifest that all men are capable of the latter; it must therefore follow that nothing but the depravity of their heart renders them incapable of the former.

Some writers, as has been already observed, have allowed that sinners are the subjects of an inability which arises from their depravity; but they still contend that this is not all, but that they are both naturally and morally unable to believe in Christ: and this they think agreeable to the Scriptures, which represent them as both unable and unwilling to come to him for life. But these two kinds of inability cannot consist with each other, so as both to exist in the same subject and towards the same thing. A moral inability supposes a natural ability. He who never, in any state, was possessed of the power of seeing cannot be said to shut his eyes against the light. If the Jews had not been possessed of natural powers equal to the knowledge of Christ's doctrine, there had been no justice in that cutting question and answer, "Why do ye not understand my speech? Because ye cannot hear my word." A total physical inability must, of necessity, supercede a moral one. To suppose, therefore that the phrase, "No man can come to me," is meant to describe the former; and, "Ye will not come to me that ye may have life," the latter; is to suppose that our Saviour taught what is self-contradictory.

Some have supposed that, in attributing physical or natural power to men, we deny their natural depravity. Through the poverty of language, words are obliged to be used in different senses. When we speak of men as by nature depraved, we do not mean to convey the idea of sin being an essential part of human nature, or of the constitution of man as man: our meaning is, that it is not a mere effect of education and example; but is, from his very birth, so interwoven through all his powers, so ingrained, as it were, in his very soul, as to grow up with him and become natural to him.

On the other hand, when the term, natural, is used as opposed to moral, and applied to the powers of the soul, it is designed to express those faculties which are strictly a part of our nature as men, and which are necessary to our being accountable creatures. By confounding these ideas we may be always disputing and bring nothing to an issue.

Finally: It is sometimes suggested that to attribute to sinners a natural ability of performing things spiritually good is to nourish their self-sufficiency; and that to represent it as only moral is to suppose that it is not insuperable, but may, after all, be overcome by efforts of their own. But surely it is not necessary, in order to destroy a spirit of self-sufficiency, to deny that we are men and accountable creatures; which is all that natural ability supposes. If any person imagine it possible, of his own accord, to choose that from which he is utterly averse, let him make the trial.

Some have alleged that "natural power is only sufficient to perform natural things, and that spiritual power is required to the performance of spiritual things." But this statement is far from accurate. Natural power is as necessary to the performance of spiritual as of natural things; we must possess the powers of men in order to perform the duties of good men. And as to spiritual power, or, which is the same thing, a right state of mind, it is not properly a faculty of the soul but a quality which it possesses; and which, though it be essential to the actual performance of spiritual obedience, yet is not necessary to our being under obligation to perform it.

If a traveller, from a disinclination to the western continent, should direct his course perpetually towards the east, he would in time, arrive at the place which he designed to shun. In like manner, it has been remarked, by some who have observed the progress of this controversy, that there are certain important points in which false Calvinism, in its ardent desire to steer clear of Arminianism, is brought to agree with it. We have seen already that they agree in their notions of the original holiness in Adam, and in the inconsistency of the duty of believing with the doctrines of election and particular redemption. To this may be added, they are agreed in making the grace of God necessary to the accountableness of sinners with regard to spiritual obedience. The one pleads for graceless sinners being free from obligation, the other admits of obligation, but founds it on the notion of universal grace. Both are agreed that where there is no grace there is no duty. But if grace be the ground of obligation it is no more grace but debt. It is that which, if any thing good be required of the sinner, cannot justly be withheld. This is, in effect, acknowledged by both parties. The one contends that, where no grace is given there can be no obligation to spiritual obedience; and therefore acquits the unbeliever of guilt in not coming to Christ that he might have life, and in the neglect of all spiritual religion. The other argues that, if man be totally depraved, and no grace be given him to counteract his depravity, he is blameless; that is, his depravity is no longer depravity; he is innocent in the account of his judge; consequently, he can need no Saviour; and, if justice be done him, will be exempt from punishment, (if not entitled to heaven,) in virtue of his personal innocence. Thus the whole system of grace is rendered void; and fallen angels, who have not been partakers of it, must be in a far preferable state to that of fallen men, who, by Jesus taking hold of their nature, are liable to become blameworthy and eternally lost. But, if the essential powers of the mind be the same whether we be pure or depraved, and be sufficient to render any creature an accountable being, whatever be his disposition, grace is what its proper meaning imports—free favor, or favor towards the unworthy; and the redemption of Christ, with all its holy and happy effects, is what the Scriptures represent it—necessary to deliver us from the state into which we are fallen antecedently to its being bestowed.*

Of the work of the Holy Spirit.

The Scriptures clearly ascribe both repentance and faith wherever they exist to divine influence.† Whence many have concluded that they cannot be duties required of sinners. If sinners have been required from the pulpit to repent or believe, they have thought it sufficient to show the absurdity of such exhortations by saying, A heart of flesh is of God's giving: faith is "not of ourselves; it is the gift of God:" as though these things were inconsistent, and it were improper to exhort to any thing but what can be done of ourselves, and without the influence of the Holy Spirit.

The whole weight of this objection rests upon the supposition that we do not stand in need of the Holy Spirit to enable us to comply with our duty. If this principle were admitted, we must conclude either, with the Arminians and Socinians, that "faith and conversion, seeing they are acts of obedience, cannot be wrought of God;"‡ or with the objector that, seeing they are wrought of God, they cannot be acts of obedience. But, if we need the influence of the Holy Spirit to enable us to do our duty, both these methods of reasoning fall to the ground.

And is it not manifest that the godly in all ages have considered themselves insufficient to perform those things to which nevertheless they acknowledge themselves to be obliged? The rule of duty is what God requires of us: but he requires those things which good men have always confessed themselves, on account of the sinfulness of

* Rom. v. 5, 15—21. Heb. ix. 27, 28. 1 Thess. i. 10.
† Ezek. xi. 19. 2 Tim. ii. 25. Ephes. i. 19; ii. 8.
‡ See Owen's Display of Arminianism, Chap. X.

their nature, insufficient to perform. He "desireth truth in the inward part:" yet an apostle acknowledges, "We are not sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves: but our sufficiency is of God." "The Spirit," saith he, "helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." The same things are required in one place which are promised in another: "Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart." "I will put my fear in their hearts that they shall not depart from me." When the sacred writers speak of the divine precepts, they neither disown them nor infer from them a self-sufficiency to conform to them, but turn them into prayer: "Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently. O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!" In fine, the Scriptures uniformly teach us that all our sufficiency to do good or to abstain from evil is from above; repentance and faith, therefore, may be duties, notwithstanding their being the gifts of God.

If our insufficiency for this and every other good thing arose from a natural impotency, it would indeed excuse us from obligation; but if it arise from the sinful dispositions of our hearts it is otherwise. Those whose eyes are "full of adultery, and (therefore) cannot cease from sin," are under the same obligations to live a chaste and sober life as other men are: yet, if ever their dispositions be changed, it must be by an influence from without them; for it is not in them to relinquish their courses of their own accord. I do not mean to suggest that this species of evil prevails in all sinners: but sin in some form prevails and has its dominion over them, and to such a degree that nothing but the grace of God can effectually cure it. It is depravity only that renders the regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit necessary. "The bare and outward declaration of the word of God," says a great writer,* "ought to have largely sufficed to make it be believed, if our own blindness and stubbornness did not withstand it. But our mind hath such an inclination to vanity that it can never cleave fast to the truth of God; and such a dullness that it is always blind and cannot see the light thereof. Therefore there is nothing available done by the word without the enlightening of the Holy Spirit."

On the necessity of a divine principle in order to believing.

About fifty years ago much was written in favor of this position by Mr. Brine. Of late years much has been advanced against it by Mr. Booth, Mr. M'Lean, and others. I cannot pretend to determine what ideas Mr. Brine attached to the term, principle. He probably meant something different from what God requires of every intelligent creature: and, if this were admitted to be necessary to believing, such believing could not be the duty of any except those who were possessed of it. I have no interest in this question farther than to maintain that the moral state or disposition of the soul has a necessary influence on believing in Christ. This I feel no difficulty in admitting on the one side, nor in defending on the other. If faith were an involuntary reception of the truth, and were produced merely by the power of evidence; if the prejudiced or unprejudiced state of the mind had no influence in retarding or promoting it; in fine, if it were wholly an intellectual and not a moral exercise; nothing more than rationality, or a capacity of understanding the nature of evidence would be necessary to it. In this case it would not be a duty; nor would unbelief be a sin, but a mere mistake of the judgment. Nor could there be any need of divine influence; for the special influences of the Holy Spirit are not required for the production of that which has no holiness in it. But if on the other hand faith in Christ be that on which the will has an influence; if it be the same thing as receiving the love of the truth that we may be saved; if aversion of heart be the only obstruction to it, and the removal of that aversion be the kind of influence necessary to produce it (and whether these things be so or not, let the evidence adduced in the Second Part of this Treatise determine)* a conclusion must be drawn. The mere force of evidence, however clear, will not change the disposition of the heart. In this case therefore, and this only, it requires the exceeding greatness of divine power to enable a sinner to believe.

If a sinner cannot believe in Christ without being renewed in the spirit of his mind, believing, it is suggested, cannot be his immediate duty. It is remarkable in how many points the system here opposed agrees with Arminianism. The latter admits believing to be the duty of the unregenerate; but on this account denies the necessity of a divine change in order to it. The former admits the necessity of a divine change in order to believing; but on this account denies that believing can be the duty of the unregenerate. In this they are agreed, that the necessity of a divine change and the obligation of the sinner cannot comport with each other.

But, if this argument have any force, it will prove more than its abettors wish it to

* Calvin: See Institutes, Book III. Chap. ii

* Particularly Propositions, IV, v.

prove. It will prove that divine influence is not necessary to believing; or, if it be, that faith is not the *immediate* duty of the sinner. Whether divine influence change the bias of the heart in order to believing, or cause us to believe without such change, or only assist us in it, makes no difference as to this argument: if it be antecedent and necessary to believing, believing cannot be a duty, according to the reasoning in the objection, till it is communicated. On this principle, Socinians, who allow faith to be the sinner's immediate duty, deny it to be the gift of God.*

To me it appears that the necessity of divine influence, and even of a change of heart, prior to believing, is perfectly consistent with its being the immediate duty of the unregenerate. If that disposition of heart which is produced by the Holy Spirit be no more than every intelligent creature ought at all times to possess, the want of it can afford no excuse for the omission of any duty to which it is necessary. Let the contrary supposition be applied to the common affairs of life, and we shall see what a result will be produced:

I am not possessed of a principle of common honesty:

But no man is obliged to exercise a principle which he does not possess:

Therefore I am not obliged to live in the exercise of common honesty.

While reasoning upon the absence of moral principles, we are exceedingly apt to forget ourselves, and to consider them as a kind of natural accomplishment, which we are not obliged to possess, but merely to improve in case of being possessed of them; and that till then the whole of our duty consists either in praying to God to bestow them upon us, or in waiting till he shall graciously be pleased to do so. But what should we say, if a man were to reason thus with respect to the common duties of life? Does the whole duty of a dishonest man consist in either praying to God to make him honest, or waiting till he does so? Every one, in this case, feels that an honest heart is itself that which he ought to possess. Nor would any man, in matters that concerned his own interest, think of excusing such deficiency by alleging that the poor man could not give it to himself, nor act otherwise than he did, till he possessed it.

If an upright heart towards God and man be not itself required of us, nothing is or can be required; for all duty is comprehended in the acting out of the heart. Even those who would compromise the matter by allowing that sinners are not obliged to possess an upright heart, but merely to pray and wait for it, if they would oblige themselves to understand words before they used them, must perceive that there is no meaning in this language. For if it be the duty of a sinner to pray to God for an upright heart, and to wait for its bestowment, I would inquire whether these exercises ought to be attended to sincerely or insincerely, with a true desire after the object sought or without it. It will not be pretended that he ought to use these means insincerely: but to say he ought to use them sincerely, or with a desire after that for which he prays and waits, is equivalent to saying he ought to be sincere; which is the same thing as possessing an upright heart. If a sinner be destitute of all desire after God and spiritual things, and set on evil, all the forms into which his duty may be thrown will make no difference. The carnal heart will meet it in every approach and repel it. Exhort him to repentance: he tells you he cannot repent; his heart is too hard to melt, or be anywise affected with his situation. Say, with a certain writer, he ought to endeavor to repent: he answers he has no heart to go about it. Tell him he must pray to God to give him a heart: he replies, Prayer is the expression of desire, and I have none to express. What shall we say then? Seeing he cannot repent, cannot find in his heart to endeavor to repent, cannot pray sincerely for a heart to make such an endeavor, shall we deny his assertions, and tell him he is not so wicked as he makes himself? This might be more than we should be able to maintain. Or shall we allow them and acquit him of obligation? Rather ought we not to return to the place whence we set out, admonishing him, as the Scriptures direct, to "repent and believe the gospel:" declaring to him that what he calls his inability is his sin and shame; and warning him against the idea of its availing him another day; not in expectation that of his own accord he may change his mind, but in hope "that God, peradventure, may give him repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." This doctrine, it will be said, must drive sinners to despair. Be it so: it is such despair as I wish to see prevail. Until a sinner despair of any help from himself, he will never fall into the arms of sovereign mercy: but if once we are convinced that there is no help in us, and that this, so far from excusing us, is a proof of the greatest wickedness, we shall then begin to pray as lost sinners; and such prayer, offered in the name of Jesus, will be heard.

Other objections may have been advanced: but I hope it will be allowed that the most important ones have been fairly stated; whether they have been answered the reader will judge.

* Narrative of the York Baptists, Letter iii.

A

FAMILIAR DIALOGUE

BETWEEN

PETER AND BENJAMIN,

ON THE SUBJECT OF

CLOSE COMMUNION.

By GUSTAVUS F. DAVIS.

Peter. Good morning, Benjamin; whither are you going so early?

Benjamin. I am going to the Baptist prayer meeting.

P. Then you attend the Baptist meeting, do you?

B. I do. I am a member of the Baptist church; I go to the Baptist meeting from a conviction of duty, and I esteem it a great privilege.

P. I will go with you this morning because I wish to have a little conversation with you on the peculiarities of your denomination.

B. You shall be welcome to a seat with me, and on the way I will explain to you as well as I can, the reasons for what you call our peculiarities.

P. Well, I must tell you that I have read and thought much of late on the ground of our differences, and with respect to the mode and subjects of baptism, I have come to the settled conclusion, that you have the best of the argument. I have satisfied myself that the original word *baptizo*, signifies to immerse.

B. Can you read Greek?

P. No. But I find by all history that the Greeks, who certainly understand their own language, have from the beginning, until this day, practised immersion. Their practice is a very satisfactory comment on the meaning of the word. Besides, I have read the ample concessions of more than eighty Pædobaptist writers, that this is the meaning of the original word, and that immersion was practised by the apostles and by succeeding Christians for thirteen hundred years from the commencement of the Christian era. As late as 1643, in the assembly of divines at Westminster, sprinkling was substituted for immersion by a majority of *one;* twenty-five voted for sprinkling, twenty-four for immersion. This small majority was obtained by the earnest request of Dr. Lightfoot, who had acquired great influence in that assembly. Among the concessions of Presbyterians, I find the Rev. Professor Campbell, D. D., of Scotland, confessedly the most learned Greek scholar and biblical critic of modern times, says, "The word, both in sacred authors and in classical, signifies, *to dip*, *to plunge*, *to immerse*, and was rendered by Tertullian, the oldest of the Latin fathers, *tingere*, the term used for dying cloth, which was by immersion. It is always construed suitably to this meaning." Notes on Matt. iii. 11.

B. Have you found any thing in the Bible which seems to support the statement that immersion was the practice of the primitive disciples?

P. Yes. I perceive that they "baptized in Jordan," and other places where there was "much water;" and the phraseology employed in describing the act of baptism, such as "Jesus when he was baptized came up straightway out of the water;" Philip and the Eunuch "went down both into the water;" &c., affords strong evidence that immersion was the act performed in the water. Then again, the early believers in Christ are said to have been "buried with him by baptism." The figurative use of the word baptism, in the expression of Christ, also, relating to his sufferings, seems very conclusive, "I have a baptism to be baptized with." I was so struck with this expression, that I turned to the commentary of Dr. Doddridge, a pious and learned Pædobaptist minister, to see what he would say, and to ascertain whether the expression could be applied to a small degree, a mere sprinkling of sufferings. But I found he gave the meaning which seemed to me to appear on the very face of the passage.

B. Will you repeat his paraphrase?

P. With pleasure. "I have a baptism

to be baptized with, i. e. I shall shortly be bathed, as it were, in blood, and plunged in the most overwhelming distress." And when I hear my brethren pray, as they often do, "May we be baptized with the Holy Ghost," I cannot but think that they attach a similar meaning to the use of the word, and intend by the petition to pray, May we be deeply and thoroughly imbued with divine influences.

B. Some of the passages which you have quoted relate to John's baptism.—Have you never heard the objection that John's baptism was not Christian baptism?

P. Yes. But if the baptism to which Christ himself submitted was not Christian; especially when he said in reference to it, "Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness," or as Campbell renders it, "to ratify every institution," I know not what can deserve the name. Have you any additional reasons for considering John's baptism Christian?

B. Yes. Mark i. 1, calls his ministry the "beginning of the gospel," &c. Dr. Scott in his notes on this passage gives my views of its import. "This was in fact *the beginning* of the gospel, the *introduction of the New Testament dispensation.*"

Luke xvi. 16, says, "The law and the prophets were until John," &c. Those who object to John's baptism being under the new dispensation, say that this dispensation did not commence until after the resurrection of Christ; but this you perceive would throw back the Lord's supper into the old dispensation, for it was instituted before his death.

P. I do; but I have been a little puzzled with the account given in Acts xix. 1—6, respecting the disciples whom Paul found at Ephesus. Do you think they were rebaptized?

B. By no means, and I think I can relieve your mind in a few words. I remark, in the first place that, these disciples were believers, and must have experienced the ordinary influences of the Holy Ghost. The inquiry of Paul related to the special miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost; these gifts after suitable inquiries and explanations were conferred. Luke is considered the writer of the Acts. I will now read the verses, first naming the speakers.

Paul. Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?

Disciples. We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.

Paul. Unto what then were ye baptized?

Disciples. Unto John's baptism.

Paul. John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they (i. e. the people to whom John preached) heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Luke. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them, and they spake with tongues and prophesied.

P. I am satisfied, and I fear, after all, that the reason for objecting to John's baptism is to be found in the overpowering evidence that it was immersion.

B. Have you not heard some startling objections to the possibility of immersion in certain cases mentioned in the Bible?

P. Yes. My minister said the other day, "That it seemed to him improbable, if not quite impossible, that three thousand were immersed on the day of Pentecost," and that it was not likely that the jailor and his household "the same hour of the night" went out to some river to be baptized, especially as the apostles refused the next day to go out until they were honorably released.

B. And how do you dispose of these objections?

P. With regard to the first, I remarked to him, that Peter was preaching at the third hour, (9 o'clock in the A. M.) and his sermon, one would judge from reading the second of Acts, must have been ended before 11 o'clock; and as there were twelve apostles and "other seventy" administrators, I proved to him by simple division of three thousand by eighty-two, that there was less than thirty-seven candidates a piece. I also referred him to the fact, that a Baptist minister in Jamaica not long since immersed one hundred and twenty-nine in one day; another in Troy, twenty in nine minutes.

With regard to the second objection, I replied, that though the apostles would not be released from the care of the jailor without an honorable legal discharge, yet under the care of that jailor they might go out to administer baptism. But there is no necessity for supposing that they did go out, as the jailor, before his conversion, "brought them out of the inner prison" into the outer court, and every one acquainted with the structure of an oriental prison, knows that in that court, there were bathing fonts, in which prisoners were every day required to bathe. He and his family, I believe were baptized in a font resembling a baptistery.

B. Really on baptism you reason like a Baptist. And are you equally convinced that believers are the only proper subjects of baptism?

P. Yes. I have been so for nearly two years. I have told my minister and some of the private members of our church, that it seems to me strange that they can doubt that penitents or believers are the only sub-

jects of baptism, when they read such passages as the following:

Mark xvi. 16, "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved."

Acts ii. 38, "Repent and be baptized every one of you." Acts viii. 12. "When they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." Acts viii. 36, 37. "The eunuch said, See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest."

Acts xviii. 8. "Many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized."

B. But you know that they endeavor to find evidence in favor of infant baptism from an expression of Christ, in reference to children; from household baptism; and from circumcision.

P. Yes, I know they do. But though Jesus said, "Suffer little children to come unto me," &c. yet John (iv. 2.) says, "Jesus himself *baptized not.*" Of the household of Stephanus, Paul says, (1 Cor. xvi. 15.) "It is the first *fruits* of Achaia, and they have *addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints.*" Paul preached the word of the Lord *to all that were in the house* of the jailer, and it is said (Acts 16.) that "he believed in God, and rejoiced in God with *all his house.*" There is no evidence that there were any children in the household of Lydia, and from the last clause of the chapter that gives us an account of her conversion and baptism, it appears that her household consisted of *brethren;* probably the servants that attended her on her trading journey. And have you never found any whole households that "believed and were baptized," in your denomination?

B. Yes, several. I called on a family of this kind not long since, in the town of Willington, Connecticut. The father and mother, and seven children and an apprentice, had all become members of the Baptist church in that town. Such instances are not unfrequent among us. I believe you did not express your views of the argument drawn from circumcision.

P. I can see no analogy between the circumcision of a *male* Hebrew child, and the baptism of a *female* child of a believing Gentile. And if baptism came in the room of circumcision, I wonder the change was not thought of by the apostolical council to whom the dissension about circumcision was referred. It would have been easy for them to remove the difficulty by simply saying, "Baptism came in the room of circumcision, and is to be observed by believers in its stead;" but they "gave no such commandment." See Acts xv. 1—31.

B. You said you wished to converse with me on the *peculiarities* of the Baptist denomination. But thus far your sentiments and mine are the same. I can see no difference between us.

P. You will find there is one point at least on which we shall widely differ.

B. I would now ask you what that is, but the time for meeting has come; we will now close our conversation, and if you please, resume it again this evening at my house.

P. Very well. I will call at 8 o'clock.

SECOND INTERVIEW.

B. Good evening, brother Peter, I am glad to see you. Be seated. Ever since our conversation this morning, I have been trying to imagine what you could mean by that "one point on which we shall differ."

P. There is one thing, and one only, which prevents me from being a Baptist; but that one thing seems to be an insuperable barrier.

B. Do tell me what it is.

P. O your close communion!

B. Do we not commune just as you do? The only difference I can see is, we celebrate the Lord's supper at the close of the day instead of the morning, because we think this season better adapted to the idea of a *supper.* What do you mean by close communion?

P. You do not receive Christians of other denominations, and this is a great stumbling block to me.

B. Let me ask you one question, and the answer, I have reason to anticipate, will show that our difference of opinion on this point, is not so wide as you imagine. Do you believe that baptism is a prerequisite to communion?

P. Certainly; though I confess I should like to hear some of your reasons for considering it so.

B. I will give them with pleasure.

Christ commissioned his disciples to "Go teach (disciple) all nations," admitting them immediately to the Lord's supper? No; "*baptizing* them," &c. They were then to teach them all things which he had commanded. One of the commands afterwards to be taught the baptized disciples was, "Do this in remembrance of me." According to this commission, when Ananias became satisfied that Saul had become a disciple, he said to him, "Arise;" and what next? Come to the table of the Lord? No. "Arise and be *baptized.*" He afterwards "assayed to join himself to the disciples." We have another example in the manner of building the church at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. By consulting

the second chapter of Acts, you will find that the joyful converts were first *baptized*, and then continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, in fellowship, in "*breaking of bread*," &c. Baptism seems to have been considered by all denominations (that have held to external ordinances at all) as a rite which should precede the reception of the Lord's supper.

Justin Martyr says, "This food is called by us the Eucharist; of which it is *not lawful* for any to partake but such as believe the things taught by us to be true, and have been *baptized*." Dr. Wall informs us, that "*No church* ever gave the communion to any persons before they were baptized. Among all the absurdities that ever were held, none ever maintained that, that any person should partake of the communion, *before* he was baptized." Dr. Doddridge tells us, "It is certain that as far as our knowledge of primitive antiquity reaches, *no unbaptized person* received the Lord's supper." Again: "*How excellent soever* any man's character is, he must be *baptized, before* he can be looked upon as completely a member of the church of Christ." Mr. Baxter remarks: "What man dare go in a way which hath neither precept nor example to warrant it, from a way that hath a full current of both? Yet they that will admit members into the visible church *without baptism* do so." Equally to the point is the assertion of Dr. Dwight, late president of Yale college. He says: "It is an *indispensable qualification* for this ordinance, that the candidate for communion be a member of the visible church of Christ, in full standing. By this I intend, that he should be a person of piety; that he should have made a public profession of religion; *and that he should have been baptized*." And how is it in your church? Does your minister require candidates for admission first to be baptized?

P. I never knew him to receive any who had not been baptized according to his views of baptism. Indeed, I do not know of a Presbyterian or Congregational church in the country, that would admit persons to the communion *whom they considered unbaptized*. I never supposed that this ever could consistently be dispensed with in the churches; but I confess I never saw before so strong reasons in favor of first requiring baptism of candidates for admission to church privileges.

B. Well. You see that the principle on which we and all other denominations act in this instance, is precisely the same. Your minister believes that sprinkling, pouring, and plunging, are all equally valid baptism; and therefore invites such as are sprinkled, poured, and plunged, to the communion. My minister believes with Paul, that there is but "*one* baptism," and that is immersion; he therefore can invite only the immersed. There is no close *communion* here; if there is any closeness, it is close *baptism*. The Baptists and all other Christians refuse to commune with the unbaptized. The question then is, what is baptism? If we agree in settling this question, then there is no difference between us. And as they all believe that immersion is valid baptism, I have often wondered that they do not practise immersion instead of sprinkling, and end the strife. They have no doubt that we are baptized; if they had, they would not receive us. We do conscientiously doubt the validity of sprinkling for baptism. The sacrifice on their part to produce conformity would be nothing; on ours, it would be the sacrifice of honest, conscientious principle.

P. I now see that your churches and ours act on the same principle respecting the admission of persons to the sacrament, but still I wish to name a few objections to your practice, which have existed in my mind, and which, I freely acknowledge, still have some influence upon me.

B. Go on, my brother, let me know all your difficulties on this subject.

P. You know the communion table is called the Lord's table; how then can you refuse to admit the Lord's people?

B. The very fact that it is the Lord's table, furnishes the answer. If it were our table, we would invite whom we pleased; but as it is the Lord's table, we must consult his word, and extend the invitation to those only, who, by the Saviour's commission, and the apostolic examples, we find allowed to partake, viz: baptized believers.

And I think I can convince you that your minister does not invite all the Lord's people to come to the Lord's table.

P. O, he says he "can freely receive all that Christ has received."

B. But does not Mr. Goodman belong to his congregation, and does not your minister believe that he has a name descriptive of his character?

P. Yes. I have often heard him regret that a man so eminently pious and exemplary should remain year after year, out of the church, where his influence is so much needed.

B. Mr. Goodman attends meeting on communion days, I suppose.

P. Yes; no man is more constant in his attendance on public worship.

B. And is he invited to come to the Lord's table?

P. O no. He was never baptized. He never joined the church.

B. And I have been told that within two months, many in your congregation have experienced religion.

P. Yes. A large number indeed have become pious.

B. Any of them before the last communion?

P. Yes; more than forty.

B. Is your minister satisfied with their piety?

P. I heard him say that he was never better satisfied with young converts.

B. Did he invite them to the Lord's table?

P. Oh no.

B. What! debar Mr. Goodman, and more than forty others of the Lord's people from the Lord's table? Surely he is on the Baptist ground. And I have been told, too, that his mother and one sister are among the converts. How could he refuse to commune with his own mother and sister?

P. None of these had been admitted to membership, and I am now convinced that piety alone, even when found in our dearest earthly connections, does not give them a right to the Lord's table. The Lord's people must, if they come at all, come in the Lord's way. But what do you say to them, provided they seem to be *sincere?*

B. We tell them that sincerity is no proof of correctness. Saul of Tarsus was sincere before his conversion. He thought he was doing God service when he was persecuting the Church. But the sincerity of Saul did not prove his conduct to be justifiable. But if sincerity be admitted as an evidence of correctness, then we claim to be correct ourselves; for we are as sincere in refusing to commune with those whom we consider unbaptized, as they are in refusing to commune with those whom *they* consider unbaptized.

P. I have another question which I presume you have often heard, and which has been a source of some perplexity to me; "If we cannot commune together on earth, how can we in heaven?"

B. "We plead for a communion on earth, with Christians of every sect, which shall bear a resemblance to that of heaven. We do not suppose that the communion of the *just made perfect*, consists in partaking of the symbols of Christ's death, but in high and spiritual intercourse; in mutual expressions of admiration and gratitude, while reviewing the dispensations of Providence and grace towards them in this world; in mingled songs of praise to Him who hath washed them from their sins in his own blood; and in exalted converse concerning the glorious scenes which the revolutions of eternity will be continually unfolding to their delighted gaze. In such communion as this, although of a more humble character, we would be glad to participate with *all good men.*"

P. Really, my brother Benjamin, you have answered my questions in a clear and satisfactory manner. I am convinced of the correctness of your principles, and the consistency of your conduct. I see that the Baptist Churches act in accordance with apostolic usage, and with the universal practice of Presbyterian and other churches, in requiring baptism as a prerequisite to communion. I have, for some time past, been convinced that immersion is the only baptism, and believers the only subjects of the ordinance; and I am now more fully confirmed in the opinion that baptism should *in every instance precede communion.* But what shall I do? My parents and many other relatives belong to the Presbyterian church. I receive much patronage in my business from the wealthy and respectable part of that church; I shall give offence by dissolving my connection, and you will admit that baptism is not really essential to salvation.

B. I will admit that baptism is not essential to salvation. The Baptists are so far from believing this, that they consider no one entitled to baptism, who is not in a state of salvation. Faith is essential to salvation; immersion is as essential to baptism, as roundness to a ball; and baptism is an essential prerequisite to communion. Is not baptism as essential as communion? Are not both *external* ordinances? The Jews were required on one occasion to offer a *red* heifer. Had they a right to say, the color is *non-essential?* A white one will answer as well? Was not *redness* essential to obedience? But, my dear brother, will you do nothing for the honor of Christ, which is not absolutely essential to your salvation? "Is this thy kindness to thy friend?" Are you not to obey all his commands, and to imitate his examples, even though he might possibly save you, if you were to neglect some of them? You must forsake father and mother, and brother and sister, and wife, and houses, and lands, if you would follow Christ, and be a consistent disciple.

Your mind is confessedly enlightened with regard to the institutions established in beautiful order and simplicity by Him who evinced his love to you, by freely giving his blood as a ransom for your soul.

"If ye *know* these things, happy are ye if ye *do* them."

P. The love of Christ constraineth me: and, fearless of consequences, I will make haste, and delay not to keep his commandments.

END OF VOL. II.